Rural realities

Trell, Elen-Maarja

Rural Realities

Everyday Places and Practices of Young People in Rural Estonia

ISBN: 978-90-367-6134-5
ISBN (E-publication): 978-90-367-6247-2

English correction: Gina Rozario, cowrite@ziggo.nl (Chapter 3)
Dutch translation: Talencentrum Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (Samenvatting)
Cover design: Elen-Maarja Trell and Tamara Kaspers, t.kaspers@rug.nl
Cover photo: Elen-Maarja Trell
Printed by: Ipskamp Drukkers BV, Enschede, the Netherlands

RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT GRONINGEN

Rural Realities. Everyday Places and Practices of Young People in Rural Estonia

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van het doctoraat in de
Ruimtelijke Wetenschappen
aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
op gezag van de
Rector Magnificus, dr. E. Sterken,
in het openbaar te verdedigen op
donderdag 27 juni 2013
om 14.30 uur

door

Elen-Maarja Trell

geboren op 16 december 1981
te Tallinn, Estland

Promotor:	Prof. dr. P.P.P. Huigen
Copromotor:	Dr. B. van Hoven
Beoordelingscommissie:	Prof. dr. S. Otten
	Prof. dr. R. Pain
	Prof. dr. J. Woltjer

ISBN: 978-90-367-6134-5

Preface

The photo on the cover of this thesis illustrates a sight I stumbled upon a few years ago during one of my hiking-trips in rural Estonia. An old abandoned and deteriorating farmhouse, slowly recolonized by weed and woodland. For me, it was a very serene sight in a beutiful place yet it was also somewhat melancholic, melancholic because the tattering house reminded me that once, there were people living in this place, probably taking care of the place, perhaps considering it their home. There were signs of the impact of people on this place – electricity-lines, an old well, an orchard and of course the buildings themselves. I could only imagine what marks the place had left on the people, perhaps it was somebody's childhood home, somebody who took their first steps there or perhaps worked on the land which provided a livelihood, or alternatively used to visit it to find some solitude. The picture and the added footsteps on the cover wrap up the central theme of this thesis – people and places. This thesis is about the relationship between people and places, the ways in which people relate to, influence, represent, give meaning to, shape and use their places but also the ways in which places influence and shape people. More importantly, this thesis is about rural places and rural young people, the ones that in the context of Estonia are, similarly to that old farmhouse, often marginalized and forgotten, by the state, in the media, but also in academic research. The abandoned farmhouse on the cover-photo symbolizes the broader processes that influence rural places in many parts of the Western world, processes called 'outmigration', 'brain-drain', 'stagnation', 'lagging-behind'. While the footsteps represent young people, the ones who's perspectives, experiences and lives within these rural places I aim to scetch on the general picture in this thesis.

Many good people and places definately influenced the writing of this thesis. As a true geographer, I choose to emphasize the places first. I am happy to have my beloved ones, my friends and my family, in Estonia, in the Netherlands, in Romania and Bahrain, in Rohuküla, Rahumäe, Duivendrecht and Amsterdam, on the flowery streets, Priimula tee, Viieaia tee, Westerbadstraat and van Brakelplein. I am happy to have worked with some excellent people in Cedar, in Järva-Jaani and definately in Groningen.

Bettina, you are an excellent supervisor but you are more than that, you are also a good friend. I think it's fair to say that my PhD would not have become a reality without the right dosage of 'kicking the butt' and motivating from your part, with, sometimes quite literally, cookies and cookie-baking actions. From 'seriously many cookies' in the snow-storm to 'buffy and glee evenings' to revitalizing teas with fresh peppermint and sage from your garden to occasional trips to film your dad's dog 'in action', I guess we have really kept ourselves busy, with much more than research (although that all could very well be a part of 'our' creative-active way of doing research).

And Paulus, I could not have asked for a more supportive promotor than you. I guess I provided you with some headache by being stubborn and also having a load of practical issues to solve in relation to my PhD contract but I knew that eventually you were always on my side. I am happy that I got to introduce Estonia to you and our travels to Turku and Washington were a great success (despite of the ashcloud). What I will probably think back of with the biggest smile though is sitting in the sun in front of our Mercator building, talking about life and stuff. Your support, positive attitude and words of wisdom meant a lot to me.

Anu ja Marii, te olete kõige toredamad ninja-printsessid maailmas! Meie ühised tegemised, nõgesesupp ja ökolaadad, kurkumimask, kuusevõrsed ja staarmeikari õpitoad, protestilõunad ja kanaliäärsed tee-pausid killer-luikedega, see oli ideaalne distraction, et pea artiklitest ja teooriatest ja tähtaegadest mõeldes lihtsalt kokku ei jookseks. Ühesõnaga: Õige! Nii peab! Ma sõin kärge seal!

Eesti keeles jätkates, ema ja paps, see on päris suur väljakutse olla kombinatsioon teie seikluslikkusest, idealismist, unistavast meelest, intellektist, praktilisusest ja kainest maamehe mõistusest. Eks ma avastan ajapikku selle parima tasakaalu päris oma segu jaoks. Igaljuhul olete te mind alati nii palju toetanud, et mulle on jäänud mulje, et kõik on võimalik! Ma olen tänulik, et te olete just nii toredad ja veidrad nagu te olete. Ja kes oleks küll seda osanud arvata, et mu kallis väike vennake, põngerjas, kes mind kunagi pannkoogitainakulbiga mööda maja vihaselt taga ajas, mulle lõpuks doktoritöö kirjutamise juures kõiksugu eluliste nõuannete ja õpetustega tervislikuks ja

täisväärtuslikuks eluks üheks peamiseks abimeheks ja inspiratsiooniallikaks saab! Triin, Nukits, Liis ja Irma, ega vist ei olegi kedagi, kes mind paremini tunneks kui teie, nii heas kui halvas, te olete alati osa minu perekonnast.

Ja Richard, kas me oleme kohtunud? I think the greatest deal of my coffee-breaks was spent chatting with you about everything and nothing. Some great plans were developed during these breaks - the creation of a new world order, the painting of a giraffe on Constanza's wall and a road-trip to Estonia are just a few examples. I think for some of the inspiration and joining in on some of the trips we have our awesome study-group, Matthijs, Guido, mannetje and Claudi to thank for. Also the ducks should be mentioned here as the key players in my coffee-breaks. In addition to the coffee-breaks, I have had some good discussions with and support from Koen, Debbie, Rixt and Nora, I was happy to develop my organizational talents with Billie and spent some constructive and nice PhD-council times with Viktor, Sander, Billie, Tim and Anu. And my dearest Zebra, I am grateful to have had such an enthousiastic co-conspirator from my very first day as a PhD, I always felt intrigued and inspired by your crazy/creative use of language and your 'patriotism' towards cultural geography. Furthermore, everybody at the Cultural Geography department are to thank for the relaxed and pleasant work-atmosphere and everybody at the Planning department are to thank for welcoming and hosting me for the first years of my PhD-life. In particular, I have to smile thinking of my roomies, Ivo and Mona who had to put up with most of my Estonia-is-so-awesome-stories but who were also a part of the legendary hallway football challenge and sharing the illegal office-couch, which I have Candice to be greatful for. And Constanza, thank you for sharing your colorful home with me and for introducing me to Totoro and Ponyo. I think it's important to be able to see some magic around us and to notice the little things that can be so amazing. That is why I dedicate this book to Maiki and Fennu, who, just by being around, could always remind me of what's important, make me smile and keep me playful.

Amsterdam__ 16 May 2013

Contents

THE CHAPTERS INCLUDED IN THIS PHD DISSERTATION ARE REPRINTED FROM THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS:

Chapter 2

Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people.

Reprinted from: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., 2010. Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people. Fennia 188 (1): 91-104.

Chapter 3

'It's good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can't stay here': Youth and belonging in rural Estonia.

Reprinted from: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P.P.P., 2012. 'It's good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can't stay here': Youth and belonging in rural Estonia. Journal of Rural Studies 28 (2): 139-148.

Chapter 4

Negotiation of masculine identities in rural Estonia.

Chapter based on: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P.P.P., 2011. 'It's a place where all friends meet. Shared places, youth friendships and the negotiation of masculine identities in rural Estonia'. RGS-IBG, August 2011, London.
Accepted, subject to revisions, by an international, peer-reviewed journal.

Chapter 5

'In summer we go and drink at the lake': young men and the geographies of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness in rural Estonia.

Forthcoming (2014): Trell, E-M, van Hoven, B., Huigen, P.P.P. 'In summer we go and drink at the lake': young men and the geographies of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness in rural Estonia. Children's Geographies.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Motivation for this study

While relatively much is known about the larger scale processes driving rural restructuring and economic decline in Estonia, relatively little research addresses how people have experienced these processes and what the lives of people living in the countryside today are like. To date, mainly large scale (inter)national comparative and often quantitative studies have been carried out to investigate rural life and places (Helve, 1999; Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010). Considering the extent of changes after the collapse of the Soviet Union, perhaps it is not surprising that research has been 'more frequently preoccupied with […] solving problems of economic, social, political and environmental survival' (Krevs, 2008: 146), focusing predominantly on the national scale. However, Kay et al. (2012) maintain that in the post-socialist context in general, a tendency remains for rural research in particular to be fragmented and sidelined in the broader focus on urban-driven transformation (cf. Flynn, Kay and Oldfied, 2008; Hörschelmann and Stenning, 2008). In that context, the ambiguities and diversities of rural people's lives are often missed and the agency of rural inhabitants as well as the 'influence of various non-agricultural institutions and structures, practices and relationships on rural lives and rural spaces are glossed over' (Kay et al., 2012: 55). As a result,a 'rather monodimensional picture of rural people and places as 'losers' in the general context of political and economic change has tended to be taken for granted' Kay et al., (2012: 55) argue. While urban dwellers are, for example, viewed as taking a proactive and purposeful approach to dealing with change, their rural counterparts have often been represented as 'objects' of transition, 'unable to cope with or adapt to the speed and scale of change' (Kay et al., 2012: 55; cf. Schafft, 2000; Buchowski, 2006).

In recent years, a number of authors have highlighted the need for further discussion and deeper detailed understanding of the post-socialist rural context (Shubin, 2006; Gorlach, Lostak and Mooney, 2008; Kay et al., 2012). In particular, noticing diversity and paying attention to everyday lives, agency and local places of rural people in combination with qualitative, on the ground research methods has been called for (Kay et al., 2012; cf. Hörschelmann, 2002).

In this thesis, then, my aim is to explore the everyday 'rural realities' as experienced and practiced by young people in rural Estonia. In the context of this thesis, 'rural realities' refer

to the everyday, local places, the physical and social context, which may become sources of strong connection and attachment evoked in people (Chapter 3); places, which are essential for identity formation (Chapter 4); places, which can have implications for individual's well-being (Chapters 3 and 5). In addition, 'rural realities' indicate my engagement with everyday practices and experiences of young people in the context of these everyday places.

Concerning the focus on young people, in line with Taimalu et al. (2007) and Blazek and Smith (2009) I argue that within the broader, (inter)national studies (e.g. Helve, 1999; Estonian National Institute for Health Development, 2004; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010.), the perspectives and opinions of young people have remained largely invisible. Within these studies, youths tend to be positioned as passive subjects and a valuable source, young people themselves, as best informants on their own lives and places, therefore remain neglected (James et al. 1998; Matthews 2003; Ansell 2009). In contrast, in this thesis, the voices and places of young people take center stage. My interest in exploring young people's perspectives and experiences is clearly embedded in my methodological practice. In this thesis a mix of visual and (interactive) research methods and a participatory research approach were adopted (Chapter 2). By using this, I aimed to provide flexibility and motivation for young people with different skills and interests to be engaged in the research and to express themselves. Thus, while addressing young people's everyday 'settings of interaction' I also explicitly address youths' agency as both research subjects and research participants.

This chapter first provides a background to the study by introducing its focus and context. It then discusses my research approach and methods followed by an outline of the thesis.

1.2. People and everyday places

In this thesis, I examine young people's lives and the rural Estonian context from a cultural geographical perspective, focusing on the relationships between people and places. In particular, I am interested in young people's negotiation of and practices in their everyday context and the influence of the everyday, local level places on young people's lives.

Manzo and Perkins (2006) argue that people are inextricably embedded in their everyday places. It is the local places, the local physical and local social context in which people spend their daily lives, that provide individuals with an experiential baggage and a starting point to make sense of themselves and the rest of the world (cf. Eyles 1989; Anderson, 2009; Cresswell, 2011). Research has shown that local places are, for example, essential for identity processes (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996; Jack, 2010) and individual's psychological well-being (Fullilove, 1996). In changing times in particular, it is the familiar places that have the potential to support individuals by providing an anchor point and a basis for belonging (Fried, 2000; Bonnes et al., 2003). A meaningful and stable environment can in turn contribute to maintaining individual's well-being (Fried, 2000; McCreanor et al., 2006).

Furthermore, local places can fulfil an important support function by providing access to networks and resources (Abbot et al., 2010). The research by Walker (2010) in rural Russia, for example, indicates that local social networks are central in shaping the life-chances of young rural people and helping them to 'get by' (cf. Walker and Stephenson, 2010).

The above impressions construct local places as welcoming and pleasant, however, they can also be experienced and perceived as hostile and dangerous. Koskela and Pain (2000) show the latter to be the case in a study on women's experience in the city where fear was a guiding principle (cf. Koskela, 1997). In a similar vein, for young people, the streets where they spend time and hang out with friends on a daily bases can be unpleasant and dangerous places, and sometimes young people would rather be anywhere else (Hall et al., 1999; Semi, 2010). Fear can indeed be a very localized phenomena, closely connected to very specific social or physical aspects of daily places (Panelli et al., 2005). For example, Oc and Tistell (1997) found that physical aspects such as poor lighting or visibility, vegetation that might conceal attackers as well as more generally run down, neglected and deserted urban spaces are particular fear generators for women within the urban environment. The relationships between individuals and their everyday places and people's experiences in these places can thus be ambivalent, complex and contradictory.

While the larger scale socio-economic processes and changes undoubtedly have an impact on people, the everyday local places remain an important realm through which these broader processes are experienced, contested and constituted (Willis, 1981; Cosgove and Jackson, 1987). Cosgove and Jackson (1987) point out that people constantly (try to) shape and negotiate the environment they live in according to their aspirations, they don't passively accept everything. For example, while 'stagnation' and 'brain-drain' are processes characterizing rural areas in Estonia, these are processes actively negotiated, dealt with, experienced, adapted to or accepted. However, as mentioned above, not much attention has been paid to how young people who live in the countryside in Estonia 'make it work'.

1.3. Focus on rural Estonia and young people

Similarly to many rural communities in the West, rural Estonia has experienced 'stagnation, migration and 'brain drain'' in recent decades (Bye, 2009: 278-279). In the context of Estonia, rural areas are often considered and represented as marginalized. Statistics indicate that people in rural areas of Estonia have fewer opportunities for education or work, and are restricted in mobility due to the limited availability of public transport (Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010). In 2008, for example, 60% of Estonia's GDP was produced in Harju county (out of a total of 15 counties) and its urban core, Estonia's capital city Tallinn (Statistics Estonia, 2010; cf. Unwin, 1998). The human cost of the collapse of rural economies and life is evidenced by high levels of alcoholism, deserted buildings and settlements and in the once cultivated landscape, rapidly being invaded by scrub and woodland (Gorz and Kurek, 2000; Unwin et al., 2004).

In view of such developments, it is not surprising that urban living has provided a significant pull factor, resulting in the depopulation of many rural areas (see Figure 1). The national migration trend in Estonia is out-migration from the rural periphery and small towns to regional urban centers, in particular into the two biggest cities - Tallinn and Tartu and their hinterlands (Statistics Estonia, 2009). In 2010, more than half of the population of Estonia was living in Harju and Tartu counties, with 30% of the population residing in Tallinn (see Figure 1) (Statistics Estonia, 2010; Tooming, 2010). In search of better jobs, education opportunities and partners, young (and ambitious) people are among the most active movers from rural areas to bigger towns and cities (Statistics Estonia, 2009).

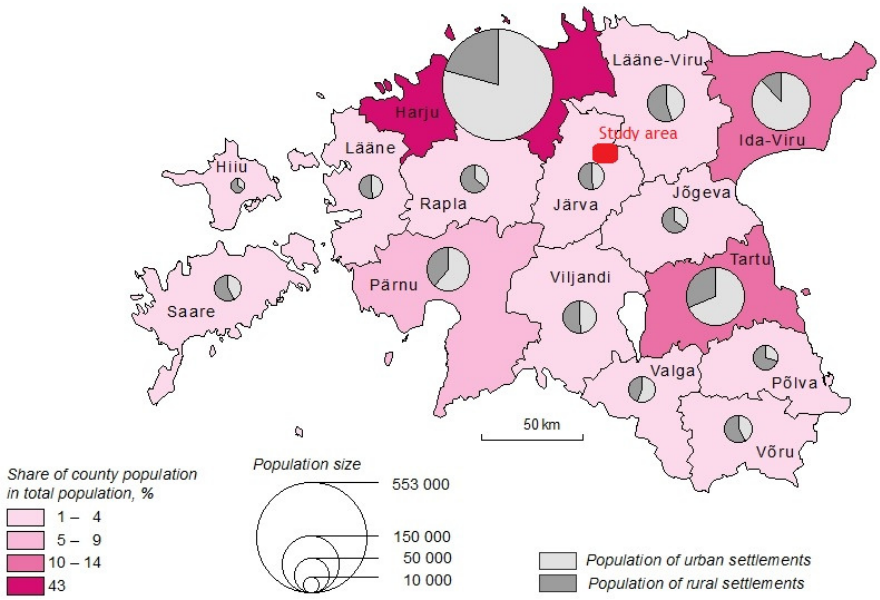

Figure 1. Share of county populations in the total population of Estonia, 31.12.2011 (Source: Statistics Estonia, 2012). Study area, Järva-Jaani, marked with a red rectangle

Rye (2006: 409) termed the outcome of rural decline and changes for youths the 'rural dull'. In some areas, this has led young people to indulge in pastimes such as alcohol, smoking, or (unprotected) sex (Estonian National Institute for Health Development, 2004). As a result, rural young people are often portrayed in the media as marginalized, violent red-necks, school dropouts and teenage mothers, interested mostly in alcohol and cars (Alas, 2007). At the same time relatively little research looks beyond these representations and problem behavior and not much is known about what it is like to live or to grow up in rural Estonia. For example, many predetermined markers, such as finishing education, getting a job, moving out of their parent's home, are used to evaluate the life path of young people (see Hall et al., 2009; Cuervo and Wyn 2011; 2012; for a more detailed discussion). However, it is

somewhere in-between, in the messy realm of the everyday, that the real life happens, that young people learn to make sense of and position themselves, that they face different risks, challenges and opportunities, make connections, create relationships. As a result young people may be more, or less, successful in achieving the markers listed above.

Whereas the lack of opportunities evidently influences young people's lives in rural Estonia, in this thesis I emphasize that opportunities and meaningful places do exist in the rural context, albeit on a smaller scale. Whilst acknowledging the impact of the wider, global and national level transitions on youth lives and opportunities I argue that the role of the local places and communities should not be overlooked.

1.4. Researching young people's lives and places

In line with my focus on young people's voices and everyday places, in this thesis, I adopted a participatory approach and as a part of this, a mix of visual and (inter) active research methods. My motivation for using a participatory approach was predominantly to involve young people more actively in generating knowledge about their lives and places and to encourage them to express their thoughts and opinions. In addition, introducing a mix of methods enabled me to motivate young people to become involved in the research project.

In recent decades research, largely from the UK, has begun to take a more inclusive, often participatory approach to exploring the lives, experiences and perspectives of youth (Leyshon 2002; Pain and Francis, 2004; Heath et al., 2009). The rationale behind such an approach is that young people are the best informants of their own lives and research should provide better means for their voices to be heard. Adult researchers are formulating questions from an adult perspective and begin with a set of assumptions to ask questions that satisfy their own interest, yet that may be irrelevant for young people themselves. In a participatory research project, at least in its ideal form, the knowledge, priorities and perspectives of the participants 'are not only acknowledged but form the basis for research and planning' (Cornwall and Jewkes 1995: 1667). The participatory approach is considered to reduce the power imbalance between researcher and researched (Punch 2002) therefore giving the young people more control over the research process. As a result, the researcher is provided with an opportunity to ask questions relevant to youth. Last but not least, a participatory approach is acknowledged for its potential to help young participants to develop and practice new skills (Valentine, 2001; Kellett, 2005; Trell and van Hoven, 2010).

Whereas the necessity and benefits of engaging young people in research has been established (Best, 2007), in practice, it is often a challenge to get preoccupied and busy young people interested and involved in a research project. Creative and interactive research techniques, such as drawings and mental maps (Matthews, 1984a; 1984b; Young and Barrett, 2001), photo- or video projects (Panelli et al., 2002; Hörschelmann and Schäfer, 2005), diary keeping (Punch 2002; Latham 2003), soft-GIS (Kyttä 2008), forms of

participatory diagramming (Kesby 2000; Pain and Francis, 2003) as well as a number of these in combination, have been adopted as means to make it more appealing for young people to participate in a research project. In this research project, the research participants collaborated with me using a mix of visual and (inter)active research methods – video, photography, walks, mental mapping and interviews. Using a mix of methods is particularly beneficial for involving young people with different skills and abilities and revealing different aspects of their lives and places (Cele, 2006). Kellett et al. 2004 found that using a combination of creative and interactive methods encourages and enables young people to develop and practice new skills (i.e. communication, writing and organization skills and critical thinking) that support and improve their self-esteem. Visual methods can furthermore bring more flexibility to the research schedule and give young people more control over data collection. Asking participants to film or take photos of their everyday environment, for example, allows the researcher to get an overview of young people's interaction with places without 'intruding on their daily schedules or following them around' (Cele 2006: 155). Finally, in geographical research, using a mix of methods has proven beneficial for stimulating people to notice and communicate different aspects of their everyday places (Cele, 2006; Trell and van Hoven, 2010).

While the inclusion of young people as co-researchers may contribute to a fuller understanding of their perspectives on the issue under investigation, bringing young people into research generates a number of ethical questions (Hampshire et al., 2012). For example, participatory research begins with the premise of 'working with intimate others rather than strangers' (Cahill, 2007: 367). Aiming to give participants as much control as possible over the whole research process might create a tension which researchers might struggle to overcome. In particular when working with participatory video, very specific and intimate details may be provided by the young people participating in the research. For instance, young people might produce some visual material that is ethically or politically problematic (cf. Blazek and Hraňová, 2012). Material produced by youth may be offensive to some people, showing them without their consent, illegal behaviour may be displayed, or video may present an extremely negative image of young people's neighbourhood. Some ethical questions researchers are faced with in such cases include, what and who should be represented and what not? Who should decide and how can anybody control it? Such ethical questions are discussed throughout the chapters of this thesis and reflected on in more detail in Chapter 6.

The knowledge generated in a research occurs within the context of the research process, embedded within broader social relations and development processes that place the researcher and research participants in different locations (Sultana, 2007). As such, 'the findings will always be interpretive and partial, yet telling of stories that may otherwise not be told' (Sultana, 2007: 382).

1.5. Research aim and outline of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to provide insight into the 'rural realities' in Estonia as experienced and practiced by young people living in the countryside. Within the context of rural decline and marginalization, I am interested in how young people negotiate rural context in Estonia and what influence that context has on young people.

This thesis consists of a collection of published articles and is divided into six chapters. Each individual chapter discusses one specific theme related to people-place relationships: making sense of place (Chapter 2), belonging (Chapter 3), identity (Chapter 4) and well-being (Chapters 3 and 5). Those themes connect key places, experiences and practices that emerged during the data collection as relevant in the everyday lives of my research participants. The themes thus represent the 'rural realities' as experienced by the young people in my research and provide indications of how they position themselves and negotiate the rural context.

It is important to note that the participatory and 'grounded' approach to data collection and analysis adopted in this thesis resulted in research themes that were not entirely fixed prior to the data collection but rather emerged and developed predominantly in my interaction with young people. As Hampshire et al. (2012) argue when answering the question what this means in practice for adult researchers trying to work in collaborative ways with young people? 'First, we must expect that things will change, during and after research projects in unknowable ways: in the words of Agnew (2006: 4), we must be open to 'being . . . surprised by what the world throws up'' (p. 231). My research agenda was thus broadly defined with the focus on rural context and well-being of young people, with the aim to learn about the 'rural realities' as experienced by young people in their key everyday places. The individual topics which are represented in Chapters 2-5 emerged from data collection and analysis. I started with exploring which methods are most suitable to use when working with young people (Chapter 2). Initially, the young people were keen to introduce to me their meaningful places and the connection they felt towards their home town (Chapter 3). The focus was on positive aspects of living in rural Estonia. As a result, young people made and edited a movie titled 'Is it good to live in the countryside?' and carried out a questionnaire with a similar focus among their peers. When exploring their key placese in more detail, young people introduced to me their relevant practices and people they share their places with. It seemed very important for my research participants to position themselves in relation to different 'others'. Positioning oneself seemed to require a great deal of knowledge of approriate performance in different places, and was considered crucial for doing well. Friends seemed to be the key points of reference for young people so I initially focused on exploring youths' places of friendships. That focus eventually lead to the theme of performing gender identities which became more significant during our meetings (Chapter 4). While hanging out with friends and socializing, identities were negotiated and established and it was important to perform a suitable version of one's (gender) identity in

order to be included in different places. Another thing that was important was drinking alcohol. Alcohol appeared as an important element of hanging out, closely connected to well-being of my research participants. Alcohol and the stories about alcohol also influenced the data collection process. At times young people showed up for our meeting after a party with red eyes and shaky hands and in desperate need of a bottle of water. Alcohol and drinking was also at the focus of several student-led videos as well as their discussions during our meetings. Places of drinking then emerged as the final theme to be included in this thesis (Chapter 5).

The chapters in this thesis are based on several consecutive data-collection projects each building on the knowledge acquired from the previous one. Chapter 2 is based on a research project carried out in Canada in 2008. A small group of young people between 17 and 18 years old were involved in that project. The methods and approach used in that project formed a basis for the methods and approach used in the following projects in Estonia which are discussed in the subsequent chapters. Data collection in Estonia took place in a small town Järva-Jaani (see Figure 1) and was divided into two parts. First, in the spring of 2009, a pilot-project was conducted to evaluate the interest of young people to participate as co-researchers, to introduce the research methods and the researcher and to get an initial overview of the relevant places and topics in young people's lives. Six girls and three boys between 16 and 19 years of age were involved in that project. Chapter 3 which focuses on youth and belonging builds on the data gathered during the pilot-project. Second, from the autumn of 2010 to the spring of 2011, the main data collection project took place. 8 boys between 15 and 18 years of age were involved. Chapters 4 and 5 which examine the performance of masculinities and youths' places of drinking respectively, discuss the findings of that project.

In Chapter 2 I discuss the ways different methods enable (or restrict) young people to communicate different aspects of their places. I analyze the contributions and limitations of what I call 'new' creative and (inter) active research methods in geographical research - walks, mental mapping, photography and video, when compared to only interviewing. Furthermore, I focus on the benefits and drawbacks of the different methods for engaging young people more actively in the research process and enabling young people with different skills to express themselves.

Chapter 3 focuses on the affective relationships between young people and their daily, local places. In the broader context of post-socialist transformation and rural decline it examines key places through which young people establish and maintain a sense of belonging to their home town. It also discusses key practices through which young people in my research made places meaningful. The future plans of rural youth and connections between sense of belonging and well-being are discussed.

In Chapter 4 the emphasis is on the relationship between identity and place. More precisely, I explore the impact of different places on performance and negotiation of different facets of rural masculinities. I examine how young men in rural Estonia create and (re)create masculinity and ideas about appropriate masculinity in their everyday lives in relation to available social and physical resources. In addition, I discuss how different activities contribute to young men's negotiation of rural context.

Connections between different places and well-being of young people are discussed in Chapter 5. where I focus on key places of alcohol, drinking and drunkennes. In Chapter 5 I explore the ways in which different aspects of place influence youth drinking practices and the associated risks.

Finally, Chapter 6 presents an overview of the main findings drawn from the analysis of Chapters 2 to 5. Furthermore, this chapter reflects on the methods and methodology used in this research and provides suggestions for further research.

REFERENCES

Abbott, P., Wallace, C., Mascauteanu, M., Sapsford, R., 2010. Concepts of citizenship, social and system integration among young people in post-Soviet Moldova. Journal of Youth Studies 13 (5), 581-596. Agnew, J., 2006. Open to surprise? Progress in human geography, 30 (1), 1–4.

Alas, J., 2007. Estonia addresses its redneck problem. The Baltic Times. Available at: http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17538/ [Accessed: 29.09.2012].

Anderson, J., 2010. Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces. Routledge, New York.

Ansell, N., 2009. Childhood and the politics of scale: descaling children's geographies? Progress in Human Geography 33 (2), 190- 209.

Statistics Estonia, 2012. Eesti rahvaarv, rahvastiku koosseis ja paiknemine 2011 aasta rahvaloenduse tulemuste põhjal. Statistics Estonia. Available at: www.stat.ee/dokumendid/67466. Accessed: 18.01.2013.

Best, A., 2007. Representing Youth: Methodological Issues in Critical Youth Studies. New York: New York University Press.

Blazek, M., Hraňová, P., 2012. Emerging relationships and diverse motivations and benefits in participatory video with young people, Children's Geographies 10 (2), 151-168.

Blazek, M., Smith, F., 2009. Children's Place in Networks of Childcare in Slovakia: what Childhood and Gender tell us about Post -Socialism. Annals of West University of Timisoara Series GEOGRAPHY 19, 121-132.

Bonnes, M., Lee, T., Bonaiuto, M. (Eds.), 2003. Psychological Theories for Environmental Issues. Ashgate, Aldershot.

Buchowski, M., 2006. The spectre of Orientalism in Europe: From exotic other to stigmatized brother. Anthropological Quarterly 79 (3), 463–482.

Bye, L.M., 2009. 'How to be a rural man': Young men's performances and negotiations of rural masculinities. Journal of Rural Studies 25, 278-288.

Cahill, C., 2007. Repositioning Ethical Commitments: participatory Action Research as a Relational Praxis of Social Change. ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies 6 (3), 360-373.

Cele S., 2006. Communicating place, methods for understanding children's experiences of place. Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm.

Cornwall, A., Jewkes, R., 1995. What is participatory research? Social science and medicine 41 (12), 1667–1676.

Cosgrove, D.E., Jackson, P., 1987. New Directions in Cultural Geography. Area 19, 95–101.

Cresswell, T., 2011 Place: Part II. In: The Wiley- Blackwell Companion to Human Geography. Agnew, J., Duncan, J., (Eds.). Oxford, Blackwell.

Cuervo, H., Wyn, J., 2012. Young People Making it Work. Melbourne University Publishing.

Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & Committee for Sustainable Development.

Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007. Estonian Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 [Eesti Maaelu Arengukava 2007-2013]. Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, Tallinn.

Estonian National Institute for Health Development, 2004. Estonian Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) Country Report. Estonian National Institute for Health Development, Tallinn.

Eyles, J., 1989. The geography of everyday life. In Gregory, D., Walford, R., (Eds). Horizons in human geography, 102–117. Macmillan Education Ltd, London.

Flynn, M., Kay, R., Oldfield, J., 2008. Trans-national Issues, Local Concerns and Meanings of Post-Socialism: Insights from Russia, Central Eastern Europe and Beyond. University Press of America, Lanham, MD.

Fried, M., 2000. Continuities and discontinuities of place. Journal of Environmental Psychology 20, 193-205.

Fullilove, M.T., 1996. Psychiatric implications of displacement: contributions from the psychology of place. The American Journal of Psychiatry 153, 1516-1523.

Gorlach, K., Lošťák, M., Mooney, P.H., 2008. Agriculture, communities, and new social movements: East European ruralities in the process of restructuring. Journal of Rural Studies, 24 (2) , 161-171.

Gorz, B., Kurek, W., 2000. The population of the Polish countryside: demography and living conditions. GeoJournal 50 (2/3), 101-104.

Hall, T., Coffey, A., Williamson, H., 1999. Self, Space and Place: Youth Identities and Citizenship. British Journal of Sociology of Education 20 (4), 501-513.

Hall, T, Coffey, A., Lashua, B., 2009. Steps and stages: Rethinking transitions in youth and place. Journal of Youth Studies 12 (5), 547–561.

Hampshire, K., Porter, G., Owusu, S., Mariwah, S., Abane, A., Robson, E., Munthali, A., Mashiri, M., Maponya, G., Bourdillon, M., 2012. Taking the long view: temporal considerations in the ethics of children's research activity and knowledge production. Children's Geographies 10:2, 219-232.

Heath, S., Brooks, R., Cleaver, E., 2009. Researching Young People's Lives. Sage, London.

Helve, H., (Ed.), 1999. A Comparative Study of Living Conditions and Participation of Rural Young People in Changing Europe. European Commission (RYPE) Report.

Hörschelmann, K., 2002. History after the end: post-socialist difference in a (post) modern world. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 27 (1), 52-66.

Hörschelmann, K., Schäfer, N., 2005. Performing the global through the local – globalisation and individualisation in the spatial practices of young East Germans. Children's geographies 3 (2), 219–242.

Hörschelmann, K., Stenning, A., 2008. Ethnographies of postsocialist change. Progress in Human Geography 32 (3), 339–361.

Jack, G., 2010. Place Matters: The Significance of Place Attachments for Children's Well-Being. British Journal of Social Work 40, 755–771.

James, A., Jenks,C., Prout, A., 1998. Theorizing Childhood. Polity Press.

Kay, R., Shubin, S., Thelen, T., 2012. Rural realities in the post-socialist space. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 55-62.

Kellett, M., 2005. How to develop children as researchers. A step-by-step guide to teaching the research process. Paul Chapman Publishing, London.

Kesby, M., 2000. Participatory diagramming: deploying qualitative methods through an action research epistemology. Area 32, 423–435.

Koskela, H., 1997. Bold walk and breakings: women's spatial confidence versus fear of violence. Gender, Place and Culture 4, 301–319.

Koskela, H., Pain, R., 2000. Revisiting fear and place: women's fear of attack and the built environment. Geoforum 31, 269–280.

Krevs, M., 2008. Sense of place and quality of life in post-socialist societies. Eyles, J., Williams, A., (Eds) Sense of place, health and quality of life. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 135-152.

Kull, A ., 1990. Trends in the development of human geography in Estonia after the Second World War. Geografiska Annaler B, 72 (1), 27-33.

Kyttä, M., 2008. Children in Outdoor Contexts. VDM Verlag Dr. Mueller, Sarbrücken.

Latham, A., 2003. Research, performance, and doing human geography: some reflections on the diary-photograph, diary-interview method. Environment and Planning A, 35 (11), 1993 – 2017.

Leyshon, M., 2002. On being 'in the field': practice, progress and problems in research with young people in rural areas. Journal of Rural Studies 18, 179-91.

Manzo, L., Perkins, D., 2006. Finding Common Ground: The Importance Of Place Attachment To Community Participation And Planning. Journal Of Planning Literature 20, 335-50.

Matthews, M.H., 1984a. Cognitive mapping abilities of young boys and girls. Geography. Journal of the Geographical Association 69 (4), 327–336.

Matthews, M.H., 1984b. Cognitive maps: a comparison of graphic and iconic techniques. Area 16 (1), 33–40.

Matthews, M., 2003. Children and regeneration: setting an agenda for community participation and integration. Children & Society, 17 (4), 264-276.

McCreanor, T., Penney, L., Jensen, V., Witten, K., Kearns, R., Barnes, H. M., 2006. 'This is like my comfort zone': Senses of place and belonging within Oruamo/ Beachhaven, New Zealand. New Zealand Geographer, 62 (3), 196–207.

Oc, T., Tiesdell, S., 1997. Safer City Centres: Reviving the Public Realm. Paul Chapman, London.

Pain, R., Francis, P., 2003. Reflections on participatory research. Area 35, 46–54.

Pain, R., Francis, P., 2004. Living with crime: spaces of risk for homeless young people. Children's Geographies 2, 95-110.

Panelli, R., Kraack, A., Little, J., 2005. Claiming space and community: rural women's strategies for living with, and beyond, fear. Geoforum 36, 495–508.

Panelli, R., Nairn, K., McCormack, J., 2002. 'We make our own fun': reading the politics of youth with(in) community. Sociologia Ruralis 42 (2), 106–130.

Peil, T., Sooväli, H., 2008. Eesti sotsiaalgeograafia: taasavastatud vana? Akadeemia 6, 1182–1211.

Punch, S., 2002. Research with children: the same or different from research with adults? Childhood 9 (3), 321–341.

Rye, J.F., 2006. Rural youths' images of the rural. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 409-421.

Schafft, K.A., 2000. A network approach to understanding post-socialist rural inequality in the 1990s. Eastern European Countryside 6, 25–40.

Semi, J., 2010. Intrinsic locations: a study of experiences of place across generations. University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu. Available at: http://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn_isbn_978-952-61-0034-0/urn_isbn_978-952-61-0034-0.pdf Accessed: 18.01.2013

Shubin, S., 2006. The changing nature of rurality and rural studies in Russia. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 422–440.

Sooväli, H., 2008. Kultuurigeograafia. Keel ja Kirjandus 8-9, 654 – 655.

Statistics Estonia, 2009. Migration [Ränne]. Statistics Estonia, Tallinn.

Statistics Estonia, 2010. www.stat.ee. Accessed: 16.10.2010.

Strauss, A., Corbin, J., 1998. Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory. Sage, London.

Sultana, F., 2007. Reflexivity, Positionality and Participatory Ethics: Negotiating Fieldwork Dilemmas in International Research. ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies, 6 (3), 374-385.

Taimalu, M., Lahikainen, A.R., Korhonen, P., Kraav, I., 2007. Self-reported fears as indocators of young children's well-being in societal change: a cross-cultural perspective. Social Indicators Research 80, 51-78.

Tooming, U., 2010. Tallinna elanike arv kasvas aastaga 2698 inimese võrra. Tallinna Postimees. Available at: http://www.tallinnapostimees.ee/?id¼210942. [Accessed: 1.11.2010].

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., 2010. Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people. Fennia 188, 91-104.

Twigger-Ross, C., Uzzell, D., 1996. Place and identity processes. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 16 (3), 205–220.

Unwin, T., 1998. Rurality and the construction of nation in Estonia. In: Pickles, J., Smith, A. (Eds.), Theorising Transition. The Political Economy of Post-communist Transformations, Routledge, pp. 284-306.

Unwin, T., Pallot, J., Johnson, S., 2004. Rural change and agriculture. In: Bradshaw, M., Stenning, A. (Eds.), East Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Essex, Pearson, pp. 109-137.

Valentine, G., 2001. At the drawing board: developing a research design. In: Limb, M., Dwyer, C. (Eds.), Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers. Issues and Debates. Arnold, London, pp. 41-54.

Walker, C., 2010. Space, kinship networks and youth transition in provincial Russia: negotiating urban-rural and inter-regional migration. Europe-Asia Studies 62 (4), 647-669.

Walker, C., Stephenson, S., 2010. Youth and social change in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Journal of Youth Studies 13 (5), 521-532.

Willis, P., 1981. Cultural production is different from cultural reproduction is different from social reproduction is different from reproduction. Interchange, 12 (2-3), 48-67.

Young, L., Barrett, H., 2001. Adapting visual methods: action research with Kampala street children. Area 33 (2), 141–152.

Chapter 2

MAKING SENSE OF PLACE: EXPLORING CREATIVE AND (INTER)ACTIVE RESEARCH METHODS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE[1]

Abstract

This paper explores the added value of the 'new' creative and (inter)active research methods in geographial research. Using examples from our research project with young people in Cedar (Vancouver Island, Canada) we analyze the contributions and limitations of walks, mental mapping, photography and video when compared to only interviewing. Given our engagement with everyday places and a participatory research approach, we explicitly focus and evaluate the research methods for their qualities in revealing different aspects of place, and for their success in involving young people with various interests and abilities actively in the whole research process. The findings suggest that, in addition to revealing diverse aspects of everyday places and practices on different levels of detail, the 'new' research methods motivate and enable different individuals to participate and share their experiences. Furthermore, combining the 'new' methods or combining them with interviews has an added value as such a mix is able to paint a detailed picture of daily places, colored by the way different individuals see, hear, smell, use or experience them.

Keywords: Canada; visual/(inter)active/creative research methods; children/youth geographies; participatory research; place experiences; everyday life.

[1] Reprinted from: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., 2010. Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people. Fennia: International Journal of Geography 188 (1): 91-104.

2.1. Making sense of place

'Place' is defined in geographic research as 'space which people have made meaningful' (Cresswell 2004: 7). There are various ways in which people 'make places', for example, by naming them, or modifying some elements in the environment to suit their needs (Cresswell 2004). Perhaps more importantly, places are (re)produced through people's imaginations, memories, emotions and feelings, both positive and negative, and by using different senses (Relph, 1976; Thrift 2009). Thrift discusses place experiences during a walk in the countryside as compared to a walk in the city. He illustrates how places are constructed through different senses and people's bodies:

> 'Think, for example, of a country walk and place consists of not only eyes surveying prospect but also push and pull of hill and down dale, the sounds of birds and wind in the trees […] Or think of a walk in the city and place consists not just of eye making contact with other people or advertising signs or buildings, but also the sound of traffic noise and conversation […] the smell of exhaust fumes and cooking food' (Thrift 2009: 92).

Such impressions can construct place as welcoming and pleasant or hostile and aggressive. Koskela and Pain (2000) show the latter to be the case in a study on women's experience in the city where fear was a guiding principle (see also Semi 2004). The examples illustrate that, whereas places can be known through one's vision and imagination the 'more direct modes of experience' such as taste, smell and touch[2] play a similarly important role (Tuan 1975: 151; Thrift 2008, 2009). Until recently, much geographic research on meanings of place has given priority to the so-called representational aspects and indirect ways of knowing a place (Tuan 1975; Laurier & Philo 2006; Thrift 2008). Little attention was paid to, for example, people's experiences of place outside the visual or communication of place outside the interview context. However, with the revival of ideas by Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1995), Bourdieu 1990 and de Certeau (2002), among others, (human) geographers have increasingly focused on everyday places and place experiences (see Eyles 1989; Felski 2000; de Certeau 2002 for a discussion of the importance of 'everyday') and the 'non-representational' aspects of place (Lorimer 2005; Thrift 2008). Laurier and Philo (2006; 2007, see also Laurier 2008), for example, have devoted a series of works to explore everyday encounters in a café and Wylie (2005) explores the relationship between landscape and self through thoughts, sensations and encounters he experiences during a walk along the coast of Path (see also McCormack 2003).

Thrift (2008) argues that, when given a chance to use our various senses we start to *notice* the 'event-ness of the world' and the *small details* that make up the everyday lives and place experience of our research participants (Thrift 2008: 12). When producing knowledge about

[2] Different modes of knowing a place often overlap and co-occur. For example, a smell can be a reminder of a certain history with a place.

place (experiences) in a 'standard' interview setting, respondents are asked to recall memories and imaginations of places without visual, audible, olfactory or tactile stimuli. As a result, some small details, or 'layers' of place (experience) may be lost to the production of knowledge. Sometimes, it is necessary to see, hear, smell or feel a place in order to make sense of it and to communicate it to outsiders, 'sensitivity cannot be shared the way thoughts can', as Tuan (1975: 152) argues. Therefore, geographers have begun to explore 'new' research methods (e.g. walks, photography, videography), that take a respondent 'into the field' and in so doing complement (or replace) the interview (see Panelli et al. 2002; Hörschelmann & Schäfer 2005; Carpiano 2009).

An interesting example is the research by Cele (2006) who used walks, drawing and photography (in addition to interviewing) for exploring daily places of children. Enabling children to create objects (place representation) in an artistic and imaginary way (e.g. drawing), and to interact with each other, the researcher, and place itself (e.g. when walking or taking photos), provided possibilities for communicating a range of, what Cele (2006) calls, 'concrete' and 'abstract' aspects of place.[3] Concrete aspects of places include the appearance of a place, the physical characteristics and objects present, but also the ways in which individuals use places and objects. A sound or a smell are concrete aspects of place. Abstract aspects refer to the inner processes place evokes in individuals (Cele 2006). They refer to dreams and imaginations people attach to places, memories connected to places, how places make people feel (Cele 2006). Abstract aspects of place are often connected to the social dimension of place i.e. other people, friends, relations. In addition to revealing a range of aspects and experiences about place, by using these methods Cele (2006) engaged children more actively in the research process.

Cele's (2006) research fits into broader, participatory, approach taken by many youth and children's geographers in order to engage young people more actively in creating knowledge about what their world is like. Whereas the necessity and benefits of engaging young people in research has been established (Best 2007), in practice, it is often a challenge to get preoccupied and busy young people interested and involved in a research project. Creative and interactive research techniques, such as drawings and mental maps (Matthews 1984a; 1984b; Young & Barrett 2001), photo- or video projects (Hörschelmann & Schäfer 2005; Panelli et al. 2002), diary keeping (Latham 2003; Punch 2002), soft-GIS (Kyttä 2008) and forms of participatory diagramming (Kesby 2000; Pain & Francis 2003) have been adopted as means by which it is more appealing for young people to get involved in a research project.

The above examples illustrate that several 'new', methods have been used by both, geographers interested in place experiences (e.g. Wylie 2005; Carpiano 2009) and geographers interested in engaging young people in research (e.g. Hörschelmann & Schäfer 2005; Cele 2006). Whereas it seems to be acknowledged that interviews are not always

[3] See Trell and Van Hoven (2009) for more details about importance of different aspects of places for young people's attachment to place.

sufficient for revealing different layers of place nor for empowering youth, not much is known about what the exact qualities of the 'new' methods for achieving these goals are when compared to only interviewing. In this paper our aim is to fill this gap by comparing the relative contributions, limitations and different insights that can be generated with walks, mental mapping, video and photography when compared to interviewing. In order to compare the methods we will use data gathered with young people during a research project conducted in Cedar (Vancouver Island, Canada) which focused on their everyday places and place experiences. In addition, by adopting a participatory research approach, we focused on engaging young people with *different* interests and abilities as active participants in the whole research process. Considering this research focus and approach, we compare and evaluate each method in terms of (1) its qualities for revealing the *multiple aspects* and *meanings* of daily places and (2) possibilities it provides for involving young people in research.

In the sections that follow, after briefly introducing the research approach we will give an overview of the characteristics of interviews, walks, mental mapping, video and photography. We then use examples from our research practice to illustrate the added value (and shortcomings) and compare the 'new' research methods to interviewing.

2.2. Research approach

2.2.1. Research location and group

Our research project was carried out in the village of Cedar, on Vancouver Island (British Columbia, Canada) (see Figure 1). The project (on location) lasted 9 months. It involved four students/research-assistants from Cedar Community Secondary School, three male and one female. At the time of finishing the project the students were 17 years old. None of them represented an ethnic minority.

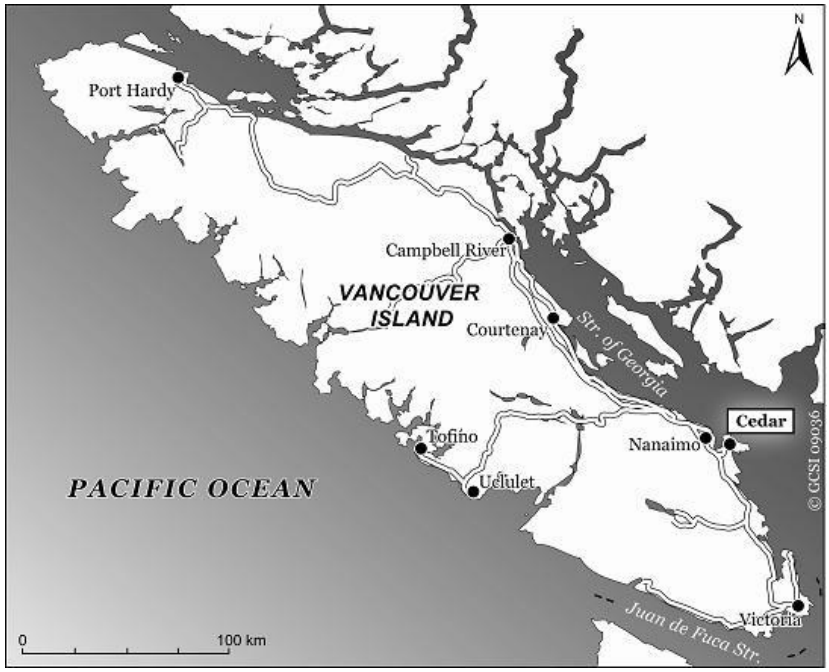

Figure 1. Research location (Cedar marked with a rectangle)

The project was introduced to the students through in-class presentations by the researchers. In order to participate, students were required to obtain consent from their parents. The consent forms contained info about the aim and procedure of the project based on initial ideas by the researchers. No new consent was sought once the students had shaped the project to their own wishes (see also Heath et al. 2009 for more information about the use of informed consent in youth research). The participants then received basic training in (video) interviewing. Guided by the researchers, the students were actively involved in preparation and data collection phases of the project e.g. they were brainstorming about research questions and possible respondents, planning, preparing, carrying out and filming interviews etc.

2.2.2. Participatory research: generating knowledge with young people

In a participatory research project, at least in its ideal form, the 'knowledge, priorities and perspectives of the participants are not only acknowledged but form the basis for research and planning' (Cornwall & Jewkes 1995). Researcher and research participants can be seen as research partners all of whom actively contribute to the project. Research participants contribute their 'subject expertise' and the researcher his or her 'academic and methodological expertise' (Heath et al. 2009: 74). Participatory research should therefore enable researchers to focus on reflection and action *with* and *by* research participants rather than *on* them (Cornwall & Jewkes 1995, our emphasis). Participatory research in

combination with various creative and interactive methods has found appreciation in youth research as means by which to give young people more control over the entire research project. In the research by Cele (2006) discussed above, walks enabled children to take on a more active role. In addition, photography enabled children to take initiative and have more control over the research project because the researcher was entirely absent from the moment of data generation (Cele 2006). Other researchers (Kellett et al. 2004; Kellett 2005; Valentine 2001) have found that using a combination of creative and interactive methods encourage and enable young people to develop and practice new skills (i.e. communication, writing and organization skills and critical thinking) that support and improve their self-esteem.

With regards to (1) our aim of revealing different layers of place experience and (2) our group of youth respondents in Cedar, a participatory approach and using a mix of creative and interactive methods seemed like a suitable fit. In practice, we introduced the methods to our research participants and involved them in selecting the methods to express themselves. By using a variety of methods we provided an opportunity for young people with *different* interests and abilities to take part in the project since, as Heath et al (2009) observed, 'some young people are simply better at telling stories than others, better able to articulate their views' (Heath et al. 2009: 87). Table 1 gives an overview of the methods used, possibilities they offer for youth to approach the research in a creative and active manner and interact with each other, and the potential of each method for facilitating youth-place interaction.

Table 1.

Research methods and their interactive and creative qualities (after Cele 2006)

Method	Creativity	Interaction: youth - researcher	Interaction: youth -place	Interaction: youth - youth
Interviews		*		
Walks		*	*	*
Mental mapping	*	*		*
Video[4]/photography	*		*	

2.3. Research methods

In order to illustrate the aspects of place that the 'new' visual and creative research methods reveal and compare their benefits (and limitations) to interviewing, in the sections below we will first provide an overview of some basic characteristics of interviewing followed by walks, mental mapping, video and photography. Secondly, using a specific location (Cedar

[4] On occasions when video was used in combination with other methods (e.g. walking) there was also interaction between youth and the researcher and youth.

Community Secondary School) from the research project in Cedar as an example, we will contrast and compare interviews to the 'new' methods.

2.3.1. 'There's not really much to say…'[5]: exploring place by using interviews

Data collection using interviews continues to be one of the most widely used approaches in social research practice (Heath et al. 2009). Interviews, in their most common form, are 'verbal interchanges where one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from another person' (Dunn 2000: 51). In order to carry out an interview it is necessary to have 'some form of direct access to the person being interviewed' (Dunn 2000: 51). Such real time contact is usually achieved by face-to-face meetings. With the increasing technological possibilities, new creative ways to access people have been explored, for example, interviews that are conducted via telephone or online, often via a chat program like MSN Messenger. Interviews have many benefits, such as allowing researchers to understand how meanings differ between people, exploring topics more in-depth, giving respondents an opportunity to intervene, raise additional issues and so on. Relatively recently, the interview process has gone through many creative transformations. Using images or activities to stimulate discussion, elicit information but also minimize power imbalance between the interviewer and the respondent have found their appreciation within youth research practice (see for instance Heath et al. 2009). However, when exploring place-related information in geographical research, interviews also impose restrictions. Importantly, interviews often do not take place 'on location' i.e. during an interview a respondent has no direct contact with the place or objects s/he is talking about (but see Anderson 2004; Hitchings and Jones 2004 for exceptions). The information revealed is based only on one's mental image of the place, or one's memories. It is challenging then to capture small nuances, multi-sensual dimensions and embodied practices of people's place experiences using only the interview method. Tuan (1975) and recently Thrift (2008) insist that those nuances make up a substantial part of what place means to people and how place influences them.

2.3.2. Walks

> '[W]e have felt [the] walks to be three-way-conversations, with interviewee, interviewer and locality engaged in an exchange of ideas; place has been under discussion but, more than this, and crucially, under foot and all around, and as such much more of an active, present participant in the conversation, able to prompt and interject' (Hall et al. 2006: 3).

Hall et al. (2006) imply that when walking and experiencing places in an embodied way, a different type of knowledge can be obtained than using methods that are used only indoors. A type of knowledge, that is 'taken for granted by the participants, but is often crucial, as it

[5] Kevin (male, 17) interview with the researcher.

reveals how places function for people' (Cele 2006: 128; see also Kusenbach 2003). Walks allow a researcher to capture interaction between youth and place *as it happens.* The knowledge gathered in this context is closely tied to the physical experiences of place.

As a research technique, walks in general include a combination of 'conversation, unstructured observations and experiences' (Cele 2006: 149). Cele (2006) calls walking (with children) a performance-based research method where being active and on the move, while constantly seeing, hearing, feeling and smelling the place, triggers conversations and reflections that would probably not occur otherwise. Conversation is also one of the central parts of the walks.[6] Walks allow the respondent to 'be in charge' - the researcher is the one 'going along' (Carpiano 2009: 263) and can be bracketed outside the data generation process or observe it (van Hoven & Meijering forthcoming). The above-mentioned characteristics of the walk enable researchers to study in detail how place matters to people, and how people use and are influenced by places. Walks have been used, for example, in studies exploring the relationship between children and urban environment (see Raittila 2006) or the role of places for people's well-being (see Carpiano 2009). In order to make the walk tangible and recall it later, voice recorder, photo or video camera are often used by researchers (see Cele 2006).

2.3.3. Mental mapping

Mental mapping is an activity that is considered to encompass a great deal of creativity (particularly when working with young people). Although some structures and guidelines i.e. the theme of the map, can be provided by the researcher, a respondent is relatively free in choosing the content, detail, design and layout of her/his map. The possibility to express oneself in a creative manner is one of the greatest strengths of mental mapping. Although there is no direct interaction between the objects, places, events and the respondents, (undirected) mental mapping allows for more creativity and freedom to express oneself with less influence from the researcher. Information about (the meaning of) places in mental maps is based on respondents' view of the relative importance of places in their daily lives (see also Matthews 1984a; 1984b; Young and Barrett 2001). The respondent chooses which elements to include and exclude from the map which means that the places a researcher chooses to focus on in an interview may be absent altogether. If done in a group context, the group can influence the places respondents add to their mental maps and the ways in which they talk about these places. This process can also trigger spontaneous discussion about daily places, activities, and people with whom the respondents spend time. The mental maps (such as in Figure 2 below) summarize an individual's use/opinions/knowledge about her/his environment.

[6] Carpiano (2009) refers to such walks (also car or bike-rides) as 'go-along' qualitative interviews.

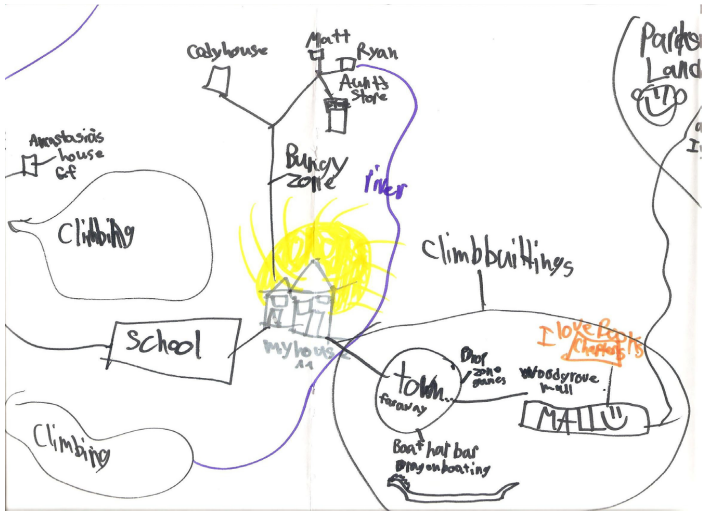

Figure 2. Example of a mental map (by Kevin, male, 17)

Mental maps provide an overview of places, objects or activities relative to each other. They can also be used to make an assessment about the relative importance of places for an individual e.g. which place is positioned in the centre (see Figure 2). Whereas mental maps as such may provide enough information for a psychologist to analyze additional meanings conveyed by the use of shapes and colors included on each map, for geographers interested in the meanings of places additional information is necessary. Hence, explanations by the 'author' of the map are essential. The explanations are usually given in the form of a discussion in the group context and/ or with the researcher following the mental mapping session. One might argue that when using interviews or discussions to explain the maps, words become dominant and the value of the mental mapping technique is undermined. Another drawback of mental mapping is that it is a method which, similarly to interviews, is used indoors i.e. not on location the respondent is communicating. There is no direct contact between the respondents and the places they show on their maps. The respondents instead have to resort to using their recollections. However, the mental mapping process and the resulting group dynamics itself can be valuable outcome and means of 'breaking the ice' between the researcher and the respondents. In addition, the mental maps can serve as basis for other research methods used, providing an anchor-point for the students as well as the researcher when exploring the local context.

2.3.4. Video/photography

According to various authors (see Prosser 1998; Pink 2007; Edwards & Bhaumik 2008 for example), much of our knowledge about the world, and consequentially about our places, is built on the visual. Therefore, in line with the rapid developments and decreasing prices of technology, the interest in and use of visual research methods, such as video and

photography, has sharply increased within a great variety of research disciplines dealing with people and places e.g. sociology, planning, geography (Pink 2007). The development of digital and computer technologies has made photography as well as video easy and relatively cheap to use.

Video and photography can be incorporated into a research process in several ways. Both can be used as a researcher-led or respondent-led technique. In case of the latter, asking respondents to film or take photos of their everyday environment can be very beneficial as it allows the researcher to get an overview of people's interaction with places without 'intruding on their daily schedules or following them around' (Cele 2006: 155). Filming and/or taking photos can be an empowering experience as young people are in charge of the process and get to represent the things they choose, when and from whichever angle they choose. The benefit of using video over photography is the possibility for the respondents to narrate their videos while filming, thus providing some form of an explanation to the images while experiencing a location first hand. In addition, in geographical research these methods can be used outdoors, therefore, similarly to walks, they enable the research participants to be inspired by direct contact with their environment.

Video and photography also have their drawbacks. Analyzing video-data is a time-consuming process. Knoblauch et al. (2006: 14-16) note:

> 'A few minutes of recording produce a large quantity of visual, kinesthetic, and acoustic data that must be transcribed and prepared for analysis.'

Moreover, the researcher has to be well aware of the influence, relationship and weight s/he attaches to different elements (sound, images, transcript) of the video data (see Knoblauch et al. 2006 for a detailed discussion of the elements of video data). The researcher has to make a choice whether to ask respondents to explain their creation (in which case words could become dominant) or to interpret the images independently. In the context of (participatory) youth research the latter is not favored. In order to empower young people they should be included in interpreting the data/their creation.[7] The complex technology may be a further challenge when using video as a research method (Knoblauch et al. 2006), although this may be the case more for the researcher than the youth respondents.

2.4. Research methods in practice

In order to discuss the 'new' research methods and aspects of places they help to unveil in this paper, we focus on a specific location – Cedar Community Secondary School (CCSS) (see Table 2). Cedar Community Secondary School (CCSS) appeared to be one of the key, shared

[7] See Hörschelmann & Schäfer (2005) for a detailed discussion about issues relating to interpreting images in youth research.

places of the participants. It was, consequentially, a place represented by all participants by one or another research method. However, even though we mainly use information revealed about CCSS, we will also refer to other locations and experiences from our project where more appropriate i.e. where the merits or limitations of individual methods appear more clearly.

Table 2 illustrates the kind of information that the students in our project generated about CCSS when using different methods. In the sections below, information from Table 2 serves as basis for discussing different qualities of research methods. In order to eventually assess the added value and success of each method, we will consider aspects of places revealed and aspects of methods such as creativity/interactivity for involving different individuals, as criteria.

Table 2.

Cedar Community Secondary School represented using different research methods

	Ryan (male, 17)	**Kevin (male, 17)**	**Shaleeta (female, 17)**	**Evan (male, 17)**
Interviews	'Well...it [Cedar school] is really my social outpost. I love it in school. It is the place that I have grown up with, I'm not sure what to do with my time when I have no school… I guess it just gives me something to do.' (researcher-led interview)	'There's not really much to say about the environment [at Cedar school] because it's just a normal, relaxed, easy-going environment. […] I like pretty much everything about this school. […] It's a really nice comfortable place' (peer-led interview)	'When I first came here I felt really... I, I was not impressed with the school environment. But now that I've been here for a while it's much better. I haven't had too many problems here. I've had problems at other schools, but not here' (peer-led interview)	'The school environment at Cedar is really, really neat. Just […] the way that the school is basically laid out is that, it really makes for easy social interaction, in just that it's so open' (researcher-led interview)
Walks: images & conversation	 Ryan: 'A bird just came out of the school! Oh yeah, we should get the birds! We have birds in our rafter. I can hear them, but I can't see them right now, they're up in there. There's a bunch of… yeah, the dung [laughing] (screenshot 1, from left, traces of birds; all video recorded by Ryan) […]			
Mental Maps & explanations	'My school is a good place and I stay there a lot so I put down my school' 	'Anyway, I got the school right here because I like coming to school, although I don't really do much but it's social…' 	'And this is like…the Cedar school' 	'So, school, that's self-explanatory' 
Video / Photography	Ryan's photo & explanation:  'This is my school. It is currently the main focus of my life. All of my activities come from school in some way, even if it is making plans with my friends'	Kevin's video & narration:  'And just like that I'm at the school. In order to get to my favorite place, up there, I have to GET up there [filming the school roof]. […] And just like that I'm up.[…] And this, this is my favorite spot to be [the school roof]. In fact I even come up and read right there, right in the shade. I just love this place.'	Shaleeta'sphoto:  Shaleeta with friends at school. No detailed explanation added.	School not represented on Evan's video. Disposable camera not returned.

2.4.1. 'It's a really nice comfortable place'[8]: Interviewing in practice

In our project we used both structured and unstructured interviews as well as peer-led and researcher led interviews. The participants also practiced conducting individual interviews with each other. In addition, they conducted a number of peer-led interviews among their friends and classmates. Finally, the students planned, prepared, conducted and filmed (semi-structured) interviews with, for example, the manager and a security guard of local shopping mall and the principal of their school.

Unstructured discussion/group-interview was the most frequently used form of interviewing in our project. The researcher was guiding the discussion but the conversation usually remained informal. We used group-interviews, for instance, as a support for the visual/active and creative approaches where the participants could explain the contents of their mental maps, photos and videos to the researcher. As an addition to the 'new' methods, interviews were beneficial because they gave young people a chance to explain their creation and include information that was forgotten or unclear to the adult researcher. In such a way, the young people obtained more control over the way in which the information they provided was interpreted. Interviews carried out in a group context also had its drawbacks. It appeared that more articulate individuals became dominant, and so did their opinions and preferences. However, the students were aware of that, were later able to reflect on their role in a group and divide roles for their own research project accordingly. The same individuals who talked much during 'practice-interviews' were the ones who preferred to take a role as interviewer during the peer-led interviews.

Peer-led interviews enabled the research participants to learn new skills such as preparing interview questions, playing a role of an interviewer, camera-(wo)man or video editor. The information the students gathered during interviews also allowed them to reflect on their own role in society. For example, a piece of information revealed by the manager of Woodgrove mall about security guards regularly dispersing larger groups of teenagers was later often quoted and used by the students in discussions about their encounters with adult mall visitors, exclusion and marginalization they experience while in the mall (and their motivation for transgressing the mall rules).

Focusing on the information revealed about Cedar School, during the interviews students were asked to describe their school environment. It was a concrete question which prompted everybody to talk about their school. However, the students limited themselves to strictly answering the question (see Table 2). Table 2 illustrates that the discussions focused on the social and cultural dimensions of the school. Interviews revealed that the students have a similar, positive, opinion about their school. School appears as more or less equally significant for everybody. Interviews triggered associations and comparisons thus revealing different aspects of students' character, family life and friends i.e. Shaleeta (see Table 2). In

[8] Kevin (male, 17), peer-led interview.

addition, based on interviews, estimations could be made about different levels of attachment students feel towards their school e.g. compare Ryan and Shaleeta (Table 2).

One of the disadvantages of the interviews was that the students did not talk much about what their places look like. Since our meetings were held at school they may not have felt it necessary to describe the building to the researcher. However, as appeared from the photos and videos, there were many details about the layout and the school building itself that made it a meaningful place for the students. These details, like the view from the school roof, the local scenery, a little bird or a forgotten football were too common for them to mention or to even remember. However, as appears from Table 2, such small details contributed to making the school a meaningful and special for many of the students.

2.4.2. 'Oh yeah, we should get the birds!'[9]: Walking with young people

In our research project, the students were in charge of planning the walk. The walk, which lasted roughly three hours, took us through Cedar village centre, through a forest area (which was used as a running-track for Cedar secondary gym lessons) leading to a residential area and eventually back to Cedar school. We used walks in conjunction with video. The students recorded the entire walk with a video-camera, and a photo camera was used by the researchers to capture students in interaction with their places. Conversations during the walk evolved around daily activities, interests, memories and friends and were mostly triggered by the objects encountered on the way.

Table 2 includes a still from a clip from the beginning of the walk. The quote next to it reveals the main strengths of walks; the objects that are encountered during the walk actively participate in the walk and the data generated. For example, a bird flying by prompted Ryan to film the school rafter where the birds nest and discuss the noise they make and the traces they leave (see Table 2 and the quote in the subtitle above). Ryan indicates that the birds are a part of the school experience and that it was not the first time the students noticed their presence. It is quite possible that Ryan would hear the birds during class and that they affect his in-class experience (e.g. provide a welcome distraction during boring moments or prove to be annoying during exams). The possibility of being outdoors and hearing the birds thus had a direct influence on the way Ryan represented his school. He was able to reveal a new dimension of his school experiences that was not talked about in the interview. The encountered objects or situations may also trigger discussions about more abstract aspects of place. In the wider context of the walk, an interaction with a Cedar tree, for example, sparked a discussion about the history of Cedar and, eventually, its social problems. Similarly, seeing a dog inspired students to talk about local life-style which led to a discussion about places in the neighborhood they liked or disliked.

[9] Ryan (male, 17), filming & narrating the Cedar walk.

In our study, the walk facilitated interaction not only between people and places but also among people (respondents and researcher). Walks can be a good means for the researcher and respondents to get to know each other outside the formal 'classroom' context. After the walk, the students felt more at ease in the researcher's presence and were more eager to take initiatives. Hence, walks can be considered useful for balancing the unequal power-relations. The possibility of interaction between the researcher and the students during the walk allowed the researcher to compare adult and youth perspectives and revealed in detail how places were interpreted and used by young people. The researcher's reactions to young people's stories and encountered objects, however, influenced the kind of information and detail young people were willing to reveal.

Similarly to Cele's (2006) findings, in our study walks and interviews appeared to provide different, even contradictory information about young people's use and experiences of places. For example during interviews the students claimed that they 'never actually do anything in Cedar [village]' (Evan, male, 17). However, during the walks it appeared that most of their friends live in Cedar, that they often hang out at these friends' places and that some of their favorite places for solitude and recreation are in Cedar.

The disadvantages of walking were mainly of practical nature. First of all, walks can be very time-consuming. As noted above, our walk in Cedar lasted three hours. Participants may not be willing or able to give up such a big part of their day (or week) to go for a walk with a researcher. In our research project, Evan was involved in planning the walk but had too many other engagements to join the group later. Secondly, when one's target group is young people (or children) there may be other restrictions involved in taking them out for a walk without the supervision of parents or teachers. Therefore, cooperation with a parent, local youth worker or teacher may be necessary. Thirdly, and specifically for research dealing with places and place experiences of a *group* of people, a disadvantage of walking can be that it is not possible to include everybody's meaningful places equally. In our project, the distances between different person's individual key places were too great to cover during an afternoon of walking (or driving). The route the students chose for the walk for practical reasons (time and accessibility) was therefore more familiar to some students than others. In addition to limitations experienced in our project, Carpiano (2009) added, for example, natural conditions (i.e. it may not be possible to conduct a walking tour with extremely cold/warm weather), time of day (i.e. the time of day that respondents are able to walk with the researcher may be the time of day that a neighborhood is un-naturally quiet or busy) or vague language respondents use that may be understandable in a concrete situation but make analyzing an audio/video recording challenging.

2.4.3. 'So, school, that's self-explanatory'[10]: Mental mapping in practice

In our research project, the participants were asked to make a mental map of their meaningful daily places. Instructions were given to include places that they like as well as places that they dislike. Besides that, they were free to choose whatever color, shape, size or detail they wanted the places on their map to have.

Mental maps were useful for the (adult) researcher to get an overview of the wider context of young people's lives/places. It also proved to be beneficial for making a distinction between the participants' shared and individual key places. Considering the interaction between the students and the researcher, mental maps were a good starting point for discussions about the daily places of participants in more detail. While making the mental maps, the students engaged in conversations about their daily activities and people they spend time with. The time spent on making the mental maps and the spontaneous and unstructured conversations that occurred during that time between the researcher and the students allowed both to become familiar with each other and were a good means of 'breaking the ice'.

Looking at the information revealed about CCSS in Table 2, mental mapping appears to have added value in revealing locations of places in relation to each other (compare where 'school' is located on different maps, its position to other places). Furthermore, mental mapping reveals respondents' view of relative importance of places in their daily lives (see also Young and Barrett 2001). Whereas during interviews students were asked explicitly about their school and they were expected to talk about this place, in the mental mapping process they were not told which places to include. When making mental maps, all of the students individually and voluntarily chose to include Cedar School on their maps as a meaningful place.

In practice, we combined mental mapping with a discussion about the maps. As mentioned above, mental maps do not provide much additional information about details of places, their meanings or personal reasons for including specific locations on the map.[11] Hence, the participants were involved in interpreting the maps. Looking at Table 2 it appears, however, that even the explanations from the authors of mental maps may not provide much additional information. Concerning CCSS example the students considered its importance 'self-explanatory' and did not elaborate much on its meaning on their maps.

[10] Evan (male, 17), discussing mental maps.

[11] Since the aim of our project was to explore student's daily meaningful places in general the resulting maps covered a very wide range of places. When focusing on one specific place and mapping it, one can assume that more concrete aspects and details will be revealed.

2.4.4. 'In fact I even come up and read right there, right in the shade'[12]: Video & photography in practice

In our project, the emphasis was on respondent-generated images (both photos and movies). Although a video-camera was always present during our group-discussions and meetings, only the students were actively using it for recording their places and (peer-led) interviews. In addition, the students received disposable cameras for their individual data collection, took turns in taking the video camera home to record and narrate their daily places and used the digital photo-camera during the walk and peer-led interviews.

Since the students narrated their videos, both abstract and concrete aspects of place were revealed. Besides the words they selected, the tone of voice of the students when talking about their place while experiencing and being present, was very expressive and an invaluable addition to the video images. A good example is Kevin who, while filming the school roof, stresses his strong positive emotions towards this place with the sound and pitch of his voice. In contrast, the written explanations on the back of photographs were more general comments in which the students described what was depicted on a photo or giving an opinion about a place.

The fact that it was possible to use video and photography outdoors provided further advantages similar to walking (see above), e.g. students were active and seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling their places. Objects/people/events took part in data generation and generated different and additional information to interview data.

Since we used video and photography in individual data collection, the participants were able to be alone and unrestricted by schedules imposed by the researcher when using these methods. A clear advantage of such choice appears from the example of Kevin in Table 2. Kevin did not reveal the school roof as his special place in the in-class interview, nor did he mention it during the walk with the rest of the group. In his video, however, the school roof appears as his favorite place. Individual data collection using video was suitable in his case as it allowed him to choose the time and means by which it was comfortable for him to reveal the importance and his use of this place. One limitation of the researcher not being present during individual data collection is the fact that s/he cannot observe the interaction between people and their places or point out/ask questions about details that respondents may be too accustomed to notice or reveal.

Kevin's example in Table 2 also illustrates the qualities of individual data collection using video and photography in enabling youth to communicate their intimate places and comfort zones. Similar tendencies appeared from the video-data of Ryan who took the camera to one of his favorite places near a creek behind his house and Evan filmed the door of his bedroom where he hangs 'everything that is special' to him.

[12] Kevin (male, 17), individual video data collection.

2.5. Discussion and conclusions

In this paper, we explored the additional value of walks, mental mapping, video and photography when making sense of place by comparing 'new' methods to more 'traditional' research method – interviewing. We furthermore discussed the limitations of each method and their suitability for involving young people more actively in whole research process. Given our engagement with everyday place experiences, we explicitly focused on and emphasized the suitability of different methods for exploring the multiple aspects and meanings of daily places for different individuals. Table 3 gives an overview of the discussed methods and the information they revealed.

Table 3.

Themes and aspects of place revealed with different research methods

Method	**Themes/Aspects of places revealed**
Interviews	Abstract aspects (i.e. thoughts, memories, feelings towards places)
Walks	Concrete aspects (birds, tractor, dogs, sounds, smell – appearance of place); abstract aspects (memories, activities, opinions, interaction with each other and place)
Mental maps (& discussion)	Location of places in relation to each other; relative importance of places; shared and individual key places; information about past experiences, opinions, future plans, interests and hobbies
Video & Photography	Concrete aspects (appearance, sounds, smells); written explanations behind photos revealed use of places, information about friends and favorite places; narration of video revealed emotions, personal meanings, use of place

Table 3 illustrates that the 'new' research methods have additional advantages for exploring people-place relations. The results of our study in part support Cele's (2006) findings in that interviews reveal mostly abstract aspects of places (i.e. social and cultural aspects, opinions and memories). But more creative and interactive methods are able to include objects, events and the respondent's whole body and senses in generating knowledge and communicating a place (Table 3). In so doing, they reveal emotions triggered by direct contact with the object/place/event. Especially methods that can be used 'in the field' enabled research participants to communicate place by using their senses (olfactory, tactile, auditory, visual).

In the context of our project, the (individual) video data collection appeared to be the best method for gathering information about emotions connected to places and gaining a 'feel' for places and what they 'sound like'. Furthermore, both video and photography, communicated the appearance of places better than any of the indoor-methods used (i.e. interviews and mental mapping). However, analyzing the visual data proved to be a challenge because of the abundance of different elements captured, especially on film and because there is little guidance in methods literature (Rose 2001 is a notable exception).

Another challenge of using visual methods is the possibility of coincidental things to gain be overrated. For example, things that are encountered often may be overemphasized as meaningful. Therefore, video and photography can best be used in combination with interviews. A further limitation of the creative and interactive methods is the difficulty to involve larger number of respondents. Therefore, the methods offer limited possibilities to reach wider-ranging conclusions about place.

Concerning the involvement of different individuals, the creative and interactive methods were beneficial because they enabled young people to express themselves both individually and in a group context. In that way, it was possible for youth to generate knowledge while interacting with their places but also with their peers and the researcher. Video and photography, for example, were beneficial for young people for communicating their places without the presence/influence of the group or the researcher. Such an opportunity was useful for involving the views of students who were shy or less articulate in the group context, who were very active or whom the schedule of the researcher did not suit. However, because data collection where the researcher is not present involve a certain amount of discipline and responsibility, they may not be suitable for all individuals.

Video appeared as the most attractive method for *all* of the students. The fact that it was chosen as a technique for their individual research project (movie about Cedar School) illustrates this point. (Inter)active methods such as making the individual video or walking proved to be very successful for students such as Kevin who were highly active and knew the local environment well. It was difficult for Kevin to sit still or concentrate on one task for a long time.[13] For example, when asked by a teacher during photography class to take photos of significant places in Cedar school he claimed he was always on the move and never stopped long enough to have any significant places (hence there are no photos by Kevin in Table 2). Filming, and the possibility to walk/climb/run outside with the video camera, enabled Kevin to be on the move and still express himself and contribute to the research project. For a creative and artistic person such as Shaleeta making (very detailed and comprehensive) mental maps appeared to be a good means to express herself.[14] Talkative and outgoing Evan enjoyed being the 'interviewer' during the (peer-led) interviews where he could interact with others. He often took the initiative and liked to lead interviews and discussions.

Comparing individual interviews with methods used in group context, the latter (i.e. mental mapping, walks) had added value as they created a more relaxed atmosphere where attention was not focused on one individual, everybody could be exactly as active as they wanted and choose different means to express themselves. Therefore, mixing methods and giving young people a chance to choose the method they feel most comfortable with appeared beneficial in order to involve everybody as equally as possible. The methods

[13] Kevin has an attention deficit disorder.
[14] Although creative writing would have suited her best.

discussed in this paper could also be applied for involving or working with respondents from other age groups. However, in that case, different practical limitations and considerations should be taken into account (see Carpiano 2009 for an example).

In the context of the participatory approach chosen in our research project, combining the 'new' creative and interactive methods proved to be particularly successful. The 'new' methods motivated young people with different character, interests and abilities to express themselves and be involved in our project. First, the creative and interactive components of the 'new' methods provided individuals, with different skills and abilities, ways to express themselves, and thus motivated them to stay involved with the project. Second, the qualities of creative and interactive methods enabled respondents to choose to work outside the group context and without the presence of the researcher. Hence, the combination of methods gave the participants more control over the research process. The outcomes of our project demonstrate that when employed in such a way the 'new' methods have added value as they have the potential to motivate respondents to include additional information about their comfort zones and personal meaningful places (where the would not go with an adult researcher or a whole group). We would emphasize, too, that the students learned new skills (i.e. how to carry out an interview or edit a movie) and gathered knowledge that was useful to them when reflecting on their daily lives (i.e. using information, concepts and terminology of the project in their everyday communication) during the project. We may conclude then that the mix of methods was successful in terms of empowering youth.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the respondents and ms. Susann Young at Cedar Community Secondary School for their assistance and for sharing their everyday lives with us. Special thanks are extended to our colleague prof. Paulus Huigen for his support and comments on earlier versions of this paper. We are also grateful to Dr. Nadine Schäfer for inspiration on the participatory research methods and.to Tamara Kaspers-Westra for her help with Vancouver Island map. This project would not have been possible without the financial support from the International Council of Canadian Studies (ICCS), Association for Canadian Studies in The Netherlands (ACSN), Groninger Universiteits Fonds (GUF), Faculty of Spatial Sciences (University of Groningen) and Canadian Studies Centre (University of Groningen).

REFERENCES

Alderson P 1995. *Listening to children. Children, ethics and social research*. 32 p. Barnardos, London

Alderson P 2000. Children as researchers. The effects of participation rights on research methodology. In Christensen, P & James, A (Eds). *Research with children. Perspectives and practices*, 241-257. Routledge, London

Altman I & SM. Low (eds) 1992. *Place Attachment.* 336 p. Plenum Press, New York

Anderson J 2004. Talking while walking: a geographical archaeology of knowledge. *Area* 36, 254-262

Best A 2007. *Representing youth: methodological issues in critical youth studies*. 342 p. New York University Press, New York

Bourdieu P 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. 340 p. Stanford University Press, California

Canter D 1997. The facets of place. In Moore GT & RW Marans (eds). *Advances in Environment, Behavior, and Design*, Vol. 4: Toward the Integration of Theory, Methods, pp. 109-147. Plenum Press, New York

Carpiano RM 2009. Come take a walk with me: The 'Go-Along' interview as a novel method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being. *Health & Place* 15, 263-272

Cele S 2006. *Communicating place, methods for understanding children's experiences of place*. 230 p. Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm

Certeau de M 2002. *The practice of everyday life*. 260 p. University of California Press, California

Cornwall A & R Jewkes 1995. What is participatory research? Social Science & Medicine, 41: 12, 1667-1676

Cresswell T 2004. *Place: a short introduction.* 150 p. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford

Dunn K 2000. Interviewing. In Hay I (ed). *Qualitative research methods in human geography,* 50-82. Oxford University Press, Malbourne

Edwards E & K Bhaumik 2008. *Visual sense: a Cultural Reader.* 470 p. Berg, New York

Eyles J 1989. The geography of everyday life. In Gregory D & R Walford (Eds). *Horizons in human geography,* 102-117 p. Macmillan Education Ltd, London

Felski R 2000. *Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture*. 214 p. New York University Press, New York

Gustafson P 2001. Meanings of Place: Everyday Experience and Theoretical Conceptualizations. *Journal of Environmental Psychology,* 2 , 5-16

Hall T, B Lahua & A Coffey 2006. Stories as sorties. *Qualitative Researcher* 3: 3, 2-4

Hart R 1992. *Children's participation from tokenism to citizenship*. 49 p. UNICEF, Florence, Italy

Heath S, R Brooks, E Cleaver & E Ireland 2009. *Researching young people's lives,* 224 p. Sage, London

Hitchings R & V Jones 2004. Living with plants and the exploration of botanical encounter within human geographic research practice. *Ethics, Place and Environment* 7, 3-19

Holloway SL & G. Valentine 2000. *Children's geographies: playing, living, learning,* 275 p. Routledge, London

Hoven B van & L Meijering (forthcoming). On the ground. Thinking through the production of knowledge. In Cloke P, del Casino V, Panelli R & M Thomas (Eds). Companion to Social Geography. Blackwell, Oxford

Hörschelmann K & N Schäfer 2005. Performing the global through the local – globalisation and individualisation in the spatial practices of young East Germans. *Children's geographies*, 3:2, 219-242

Kellett M 2005. *How to develop children as researchers. A step-by-step guide to teaching the research process*, 196 p. Paul Chapman Publishing, London

Kellett M, R Forrest, N Dent & S Ward 2004. Just teach us the skills please, we'll do the rest: empowering ten-year-olds as active researchers. *Children & Society*, 18, 329-343

Kesby M 2000. Participatory diagramming: deploying qualitative methods through an action research epistemology. *Area*, 32, 423-435

Knoblauch H, JR Schnettler & HG Soeffner 2006. *Video analysis. Methodology and methods: qualitative audiovisual data analysis in sociology,* 219 p. Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main

Koskela H & Pain R 2000. Revisiting fear and place: women's fear of attack and the built environment. *Geoforum* 31, 269–80

Kusenbach M 2003. Street-phenomenology: the go-along as ethnographic research tool. *Ethnography* 4: 3, 449-479

Kyttä M (2008). *Children in Outdoor Contexts.* 208 p. VDM Verlag Dr. Mueller, Ssarbrücken

Latham A 2003. Research, performance, and doing human geography: some reflections on the diary-photograph, diary-interview method. *Environment and Planning A* 35:11, 1993-2017

Laurier E & C Philo 2006. Possible geographies: a passing encounter in a café. *Area* 38:4, 353-363

Laurier E & C Philo 2007. A Parcel of Muddling Muckworms': revisiting Habermas and the English Coffee House. *Social and Cultural Geography*. 8: 2, 259-281

Laurier E 2008. How breakfast happens in the café. *Time & Society* 17:1, 119-143

Lorimer H 2005. Cultural geography: the busyness of being 'more-than-representational'. *Progress in Human Geography* 29:1, 83-94

McCormack DP 2003. An event of geographical ethics in spaces of affect. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 28:4, 488-507

Massey D, Allen J & P Sarre 1999. *Human geography today*. 340 p. Polity Press, Cambridge

Matthews MH 1984a. Cognitive mapping abilities of young boys and girls. *Geography. Journal of the Geographical Association* 69:4, 327-336

Matthews MH 1984b. Cognitive maps: a comparison of graphic and iconic techniques. *Area* 16:1, 33-40

Merleau-Ponty M 1945 (1995). *Phenomenology of Perception*. 488 p. Routledge, London

Pain R & P Francis 2003. Reflections on participatory research. *Area*, 35, 46-54

Panelli R, Nairn K & J McCormack 2002. 'We make our own fun': reading the politics of youth with(in) community. *Sociologia Ruralis* 42:2, 106-130

Pink S 2007. *Doing visual ethnography: images, media and representation in research,* 196 p. Sage, London

Prosser J 1999 Image-based research: a sourcebook for qualitative researchers. 318 p. RoutledgeFalmer, London & New York

Punch S 2002. Research with children: the same or different from research with adults? *Childhood - a Global Journal of Child Research* 9:3, 321-341

Raittila R 2006. Methodological approaches to pre-school children's relationship with the urban environment. In S Tani (ed). *Sustainable development through education. Proceedings of the international conference on environmental education. Helsinki, 14 June 2005*, 111-126. University of Helsinki, Helsinki

Relph EC 1976. *Place and Placelessness.* 156 p. Pion Press, London

Rose G 2001. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials***.** 304 p. Sage Publications, London

Semi J 2004. Fear in Urban Space: experiences of space and fear among young people in Joensuu. *The Finnish Journal of Youth Research ('Nuorisotutkimus')* 22:1, 17-29

Thrift N 2008. *Non-representational theory,* 325 p. Routledge, New York

Thrift N 2009. Space: the Fundamental Stuff of Geography. In Clifford N, Holloway SL, Rice SP & G Valentine (eds). *Key Concepts in Geography***.** 462 p. Sage Publications, London

Trell EM & B van Hoven (forthcoming). Place attachment in rural areas: a participatory research project with youth in Cedar, British Columbia. In den Toonder J (ed). *Re-Exploring Canadian Space*. Canada Cahiers

Tuan Y-F 1975. Place: An Experiential Perspective. *Geographical Review* 65: 2, 151-165

Valentine G 2001. At the drawing board: developing a research design. In Limb M & C Dwyer (Eds). *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers. Issues and Debates,* 41-54. Arnold, London

Wylie J 2005. A single day's walking: narrating self and landscape on the South West Coast Path. *Transactions of the Institute of British geographers* 30, 234-247

Young L & H Barrett 2001. Adapting visual methods: action research with Kampala street children. *Area* 33:2, 141-152

Chapter 3

’IT’S GOOD TO LIVE IN JÄRVA-JAANI, BUT WE CAN’T STAY HERE’[1]: YOUTH AND BELONGING IN RURAL ESTONIA[2]

Abstract

In the broader context of post-socialist transition and rural decline, we examine the everyday lives of young people in rural Estonia. We focus in particular on key places of belonging for youths and the practices and experiences through which rural young people develop a sense of belonging to their local places. Our aim is to identify links between the everyday context and broader changes influencing young rural lives in Estonia. The findings indicate that in contrast to the mostly negative portrait that the statistics paint of rural Estonia, a focus on the everyday level reveals significant places and practices which can provide encouraging and supportive bases for young people to negotiate and respond to global changes. In addition, the results indicate that it is fruitful to focus on the everyday context, as a more nuanced picture of continuities and discontinuities associated with post-socialist transition may be revealed.

Keywords: young people; belonging; rural Estonia; post-socialist; transition.

[1] Ivo, male, 19.

[2] Reprinted from: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P., 2012. ‘’It’s good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can’t stay here’: Youth and belonging in rural Estonia’. Journal of Rural Studies 28 (2): 139-148.

3.1. Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union marked the beginning of a rapid change in its former republics. After the long rule of the communist regime and the reliance on a planned economy and controlled societal life, most post-socialist nations have witnessed a swift and radical shift towards democratic government and a market economy. The extensive economic transformations and social dislocations that accompanied post-socialist transition have marked a 'fundamental reorganization' of the fabric of life (Smith and Pickles 1998: 4-5).

Considering the extent of the transformations, it is not surprising that much research dealing with post-socialist transition has focused on the political and economic macro-structures of change (Musil, 1993; Sachs , 1994; Aslund, 2002). However, as Smith and Pickles (1998: 1-2) pointed out when comparing the influences of transition on different post-socialist countries, and as the case of Estonia presented in this paper illustrates, transition implies more than a 'relatively unproblematic implementation of a set of policies'. The starting point from which transition commenced was different for each nation (Smith and Pickles, 1998). Similarly, the outcomes of transition differ significantly by region (van Hoven and Pfaffenbach, 2002), or even at the level of social groups depending on, for example, gender (Hörschelmann and van Hoven, 2003), ethnicity (Thelen et al., 2011) or age (Nugin, 2008). Nugin (2008), for example, illustrates that depending on their age, people in Estonia perceived and experienced the uncertainties created by post-socialist transition as either opportunities or risks. Similarly, Kay's article in this issue (Kay, 2012) discusses the ways in which age (in this case old age) intersects with experiences of vulnerability and social security in post-socialist rural contexts. Research by Hörschelmann and van Hoven (2003) has shown that women in the former GDR experienced a particularly acute sense of disenfranchisement as a result of radical alterations in their social, cultural, economic and political positions after the unification of Germany. Therefore, as Hörschelmann (2002) has argued, the grand transition narratives may not do justice to the various ways in which people experience, negotiate and deal with transition in their everyday lives.

In this paper we focus on exploring the outcomes of transition, or 'actually existing post-socialism'[3] (Stenning and Hörschelmann, 2008: 314), as experienced and negotiated by young people in rural Estonia. We show that although large-scale processes of transition have placed rural Estonian youths in a vulnerable position, susceptible to social exclusion (Saarniit, 1999), their local everyday context provides young people with opportunities for belonging and inclusion, as well as for negotiating and responding to the uncertain times. In doing so, we focus on key places of belonging for youth in rural Estonia. We analyse on which grounds and through which practices and experiences young people develop a sense

[3] This wordplay intentionally echoes the commonly used terms 'actually existing socialism' (Bahro 1979) and 'actually existing/occurring transition' (Pickles and Smith 1998).

of belonging to their local places and what impact these places, in turn, have on young people.

The paper starts with an overview of Estonia in transition, with a particular focus on the influences of broader changes on the living conditions of youth in rural Estonia. We will then explore how everyday places shape individuals' lives, and how a sense of belonging can be grounded in the 'everyday'. After introducing our research location, participants and methods of data collection, the paper focuses on key places and practices of belonging for rural Estonian young people.

3.2. Estonia and transition

Lugus and Hachey (1995) argue that Estonia has followed one of the most determined paths towards capitalist modernization of all the states of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Following independence in 1991, strong neo-liberal transitional strategies were adopted, with the establishment of the free-market economy being a 'strong (and only) priority of the ruling right-wing government coalition' (Trumm, 2006: 3; see also Unwin, 1998). Initially, a bewildering variety of new opportunities were created for people in terms of work, study and travel, for example. The economy, foreign investments and trade grew rapidly (World Bank 2008). Compared to the conditions in other post-socialist countries, Estonia has therefore often been characterized as a 'success story' (Panagiotou, 2001; Lauristin, 2003; Gylfason and Hochreiter, 2009). This success is further emphasized by Estonia's inclusion in the European Union in 2004 and the Euro zone in 2011 (European Commission, 2011). However, opportunities to benefit from the choices and options as well as the risks associated with new economic, political and social conditions were not distributed equally. The process of transformation has enabled some social groups and geographic areas to prosper relatively rapidly, while forcing others to fall into poverty (see also Pickles and Smith 1998), thus causing significant inequalities between the so-called 'winners' and 'losers' of transition (Unwin, 1998; Saar, 2008). Large differences in the standard of living and competitive ability between Estonia's urban and rural regions illustrate the increasing social and spatial differentiation within the country (Estonian Human Development Report 2009; Statistics Estonia, 2010a). In 2008, for example, 60% of Estonia's GDP was produced in Harju county (out of a total of 15 counties) and its urban core, Estonia's capital city Tallinn (Statistics Estonia, 2010a; see also Unwin, 1998).

Rural areas are often considered among the greatest 'losers' of the post-socialist transition. Statistics indicate that people in rural areas of Estonia have fewer opportunities for education or work, and are restricted in mobility due to the limited availability of public transport (Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010; Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007). Unwin et al. (2004) describe the effects of transition on rural life as 'overwhelmingly negative' (p. 121). The human cost of the collapse of rural economies and life is evidenced by high levels of alcoholism, deserted buildings and settlements and in the once cultivated

landscape, rapidly being 'recolonised by scrub and woodland' (Unwin et al., 2004: 121-123; see also Gorz and Kurek, 2000).

In view of such developments, it is not surprising that urban living has provided a significant pull factor, resulting in the depopulation of many rural areas. The national migration trend in Estonia is out-migration from the rural periphery and small towns to regional urban centers, in particular into the two biggest cities – Tallinn and Tartu and their hinterlands (Statistics Estonia, 2009). In 2010, more than half of the population of Estonia was living in Harju[4] and Tartu counties, with 30% of the population residing in Tallinn (Statistics Estonia, 2010b; Tooming, 2010). Young (and ambitious) people are among the most active movers from rural areas to bigger towns and cities (Statistics Estonia, 2009). In 2007, for instance, nearly 40% of young people in Estonia changed residence, and it was the rural periphery of counties that lost the largest number of young people (Statistics Estonia, 2009; see also Jõeveer, 2003). In other post-socialist countries similar tendencies can be noted. In particular young people, as White (2010) and Walker (2010) have argued, see migration as the only option left for making the most of the new opportunities, increasing their social status, or sometimes simply for survival (see also Walker and Stephenson, 2010).

Young people who migrate to the cities may find new opportunities, but they are also exposed to new risks as they enter a 'dynamic yet equally unreliable space' (Habeck, 2009: 200). Those young people who remain behind in rural areas, however, experience different risks arising from the lack of income opportunities, facilities and recreational outlets. Rye (2006) termed the outcome of rural decline and changes for youths the 'rural dull'. In some areas, this has led young people to indulge in pastimes such as alcohol, smoking, or (unprotected) sex (Estonian National Institute for Health Development, 2004)[5].

Whereas the lack of opportunities evidently influences young people's lives in rural Estonia, in this paper we emphasize that opportunities and meaningful places do exist in the rural context, albeit on a smaller scale. It is precisely these local places, in which people spend their *daily lives*, that have the potential to support individuals by providing an anchor point and a basis for belonging in changing times (Fried, 2000; Bonnes and Bonaito, 2003). For example, in their research on youth citizenship in Moldova, Abbott et al. (2010) found that whereas youths in Moldova were disengaged from the formal economy and political system, they were socially integrated in their local community, which gave them a sense of belonging in Moldovan society in general. They argue: 'Those [youths] who lacked even this kind of support [at the local level] were particularly unfortunate' (2010: 583). Everyday places of belonging can thus become especially relevant for rural young people and their well-being[6].

[4] Tallinn is located in Harju county.

[5] Rural youths around the globe face similar problems (see, for example, Atav & Spencer 2002; Leatherdale et al. 2007; Valentine et al. 2008).

[6] See also Nakhshina (2012) in this special issue, who shows how specific everyday practices and attitudes to local resources mitigate aspects of identity and belonging in rural Russia.

3.3. Everyday context and the sense of belonging

Our everyday places, places where we are 'first of all and most often' (Felski, 1999:29), are places where most of our experiences unfold and where the greatest part of our social interaction occurs. By means of experiences, activities and interaction, and with time, a sense of belonging to particular locales develops (Rubenstein and Parmalee, 1992). A sense of belonging implies the feeling of being included and of being a part of a place or group (Pretty et al., 2003). In addition, belonging involves a certain fit with and being acknowledged as a member in a place and by the other members (Benedicto and Moran, 2007).

A sense of belonging is associated with many positive outcomes for individuals. Osterman (2000) states that young people who experience a sense of belonging in their everyday context have a 'stronger supply of inner resources,' they 'perceive themselves to be more competent and autonomous', have 'higher levels of intrinsic motivation' and a 'stronger sense of identity', but also a 'willingness to conform to and adopt established norms and values' (p. 343). A teenager's sense of connectedness to family and school is moreover associated with lower rates of emotional distress, substance abuse, sexual activity and violence (Resnick et al., 1997 in Osterman 2000). At the community level, a sense of belonging can result in more engagement, participation and social cohesion (Putnam, 2000; Campbell, 2005). A sense of belonging can motivate individuals to take care of their living environment and to stay close or return to their meaningful places (Fullilove, 1996; Fried, 2000).

Research in environmental psychology has indicated that especially in times of change and stress everyday places play an important role (Korpela and Hartig, 1996; Twigger-Ross et al., 2003; Manzo, 2005). The routine, familiarity and predictability associated with the 'everyday' can offer individuals an anchor point and stability. Within their familiar places people are likely to relax more easily and can therefore collect themselves after threatening or negative experiences (Korpela and Hartig, 1996). Young people in the research by Korpela and Hartig (1996), for example, actively and consciously used their everyday places to gain a sense of calm or escape from social pressures. In addition, Twigger-Ross et al. (2003) argue that people derive much of the sense of who they are and much of their self-esteem from their group memberships or place belongings. Everyday places thus also enhance (young) people's capacities to make sense of and deal with global changes and uncertainties (Manzo, 2005; Hörschelmann and Schäfer, 2005).

Both physical and social aspects of place play a role in the development of a sense of belonging. The relevance of the physical environment for people's place-experiences is reflected in the important role that places play, for example in providing conditions that support intended activities (Brown and Raymond, 2007). Abbot-Chapman (2006) found that teenagers' favourite places often include places with water, because they afford

opportunities for popular and desired activities, such as fishing, sailing or swimming (see also Trell and van Hoven, 2011). However, perhaps even more influential for *young people's* sense of belonging are the social aspects of places: other (young) people.

Social psychologists argue that youth is a key period of identity construction (Erikson, 1968), and it is predominantly in relations and interaction with others that identities develop (Piaget, 1965). The social aspects of places – the possibility for interaction, meeting, seeing others and being seen – are therefore particularly influential for young people's place preference. In research by Trell and van Hoven (2011), for example, interaction with friends and peers at the mall and school resulted in these locations becoming key places for youths in rural Canada. In this paper, we therefore focus on key social meeting places for young people. In the sections that follow, we will explore in more detail places and practices of belonging for youths in the small rural Estonian town of Järva-Jaani.

3.4. Järva-Jaani in the context of rural Estonia

Järva-Jaani is a small town in central Estonia (see Figure 1). It is located in one of the most agricultural and least densely populated areas of Estonia (14.7 per sq. km compared to the Estonian average of 30.9 per sq. km) (Regional Portrait of Estonia: Järvamaa, 2010). Employment in agriculture is the main source of income for local people, followed by employment in the food processing and forestry sectors. In 2008, approximately 1000 people lived in Järva-Jaani town (Järva-Jaani municipality development plan, 2008).

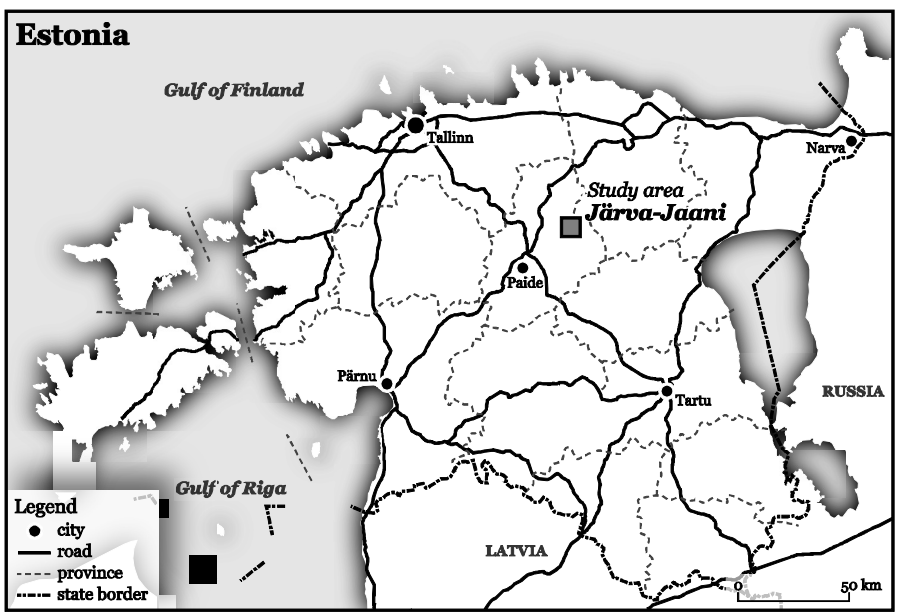

Figure 1. Location of Järva-Jaani

In a way similar to other peripheral rural areas in Estonia, during the past decades the population of Järva-Jaani municipality has been steadily decreasing (Statistics Estonia, 2010b). Over the past two decades (1989-2009), the population has decreased by more than 30% (Järva-Jaani municipality development plan, 2008). Population decline and economic hardship are visible in Järva-Jaani in the number of abandoned and deteriorating buildings. However, unlike many surrounding rural towns and villages where basic services have been closed, due to its central location Järva-Jaani town is still able to provide many services (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Central square of Järva-Jaani with the general store, library and the church (photo: Elen-Maarja Trell)

3.5. Research approach and methods

Data collection for this paper was carried out in Järva-Jaani in the spring of 2009. Repeat visits to Järva-Jaani were made in 2010 and 2011. The aim was to map the key places and practices of youths and to investigate young people's sense of belonging and well-being in rural Estonia. We focused on young people in their last three years of high school. Potential participants were contacted via teachers, the activity counsellor of the local high school, as well as information posters. During the first meeting with the potential participants, the aims, activities and research methods of the project were introduced by one of the researchers. Informed consent was sought and information about confidentiality and use of

the data given[7]. Six girls and three boys between 16 and 19 years of age were involved in this project. The researcher and the participants met on average twice a week, mostly at the local high school, but occasionally also at other locations, such as the town square, 'House of Culture' (a centre for social and cultural activities, inherited from Soviet times) or the hamburger kiosk/café in Järva-Jaani town.

Our aim was to enable the respondents to participate in the project *as co-researchers.*[8] In order to achieve this, a participatory approach and a mix of qualitative methods were used. Using a participatory approach implied that the respondents helped define the focus of the project, formulated questions and led the process of data collection. For example, after deciding on the topics of the questionnaire together with the researcher, most of the questions were formulated by the students. The students were also responsible for producing a video of their daily places in a small group. At the end of the project each participant received a certificate stating their participation, responsibilities and skills learned during the project. Giving young people some control over the research project helped, at least to some extent, to counter the power imbalance between the adult researcher and the young respondents (see also Heath et al., 2009). Adopting the participatory approach seemed successful, as the students connected with the project and after the first few meetings referred to it as 'our' project. The informal and friendly style the participants used when communicating with the researcher indicated to her that they felt at ease in the project.

In order to explore youth places, activities and opinions on life in Järva-Jaani, we used the following methods: video, a questionnaire, mental mapping and peer-led as well as researcher-led interviews. For the video project, young people chose their own topics of interest. The three resulting films focused on youth leisure activities, hobbies and accomplishments in Järva-Jaani. The questionnaire focused on everyday places and activities of youths in Järva-Jaani, their perceptions of life in the countryside and their future plans. The questionnaire was distributed to students between the ages of 14 and 18 attending the local high school (response rate 79.6%; n=47). The (peer-led, video) interviews focused on places identified by mental mapping, questionnaires and group meetings as key places for youths in Järva-Jaani. In addition to interviews with young people, an interview with the head teacher of the local high school, was held. By using a mix of multiple, qualitative methods, we were able to explore different facets of places and place experiences (see also Cele, 2006). In addition, we were able to give young people with different skills a chance to express themselves in ways other than words (Valentine, 2001), and motivate them to develop and practise new skills (Kellet et al., 2004). We have discussed the contributions of

[7] Although in personal conversations the participants encouraged the researchers to use their real identities when disseminating the research results, in the interest of confidentiality, in this paper the names used are fictional. However, in agreement with the participants, the original name of the research location is used.
[8] The work by Hart (1997) on young people's participation was used as a guideline to achieve meaningful participation (see also Heath et al. 2009).

using a mix of methods in youth research as well as ways in which such an approach can enhance the research process in more detail elsewhere (Trell and van Hoven, 2010). For this article we chose to rely mainly on our qualitative interviewing, because it best represents the young people's way of relating to their everyday places.

3.6. Key meeting places of youths in Järva-Jaani

Our data analysis suggests that the social life of youths in Järva-Jaani revolves around two key places: the House of Culture *Kultra* and a local hamburger kiosk, *Burks.* The House of Culture is located in the centre of Järva-Jaani town. Opened in 1951, the House of Culture has played an important role in cultural activities and community life in Järva-Jaani. In 2009, *Kultra* offered the following activities and courses: dancing (children, youths, adults, seniors), choir, band, aerobics, art lessons and yoga (Järvamaa information portal 2010). In addition, *Kultra* is used and rented out for parties and birthdays, the school Christmas gala, youth discos and concerts. *Burks* is a place located on the edge of town, one kilometer from the town centre, next to an industrial area and a motorway (see Table 1). It is a combination of a fast food café and a grocery store. Adjacent to the shop area is a small room with a few tables and chairs, TV and a pool table, which is open to the public. Whereas in *Kultra* people from different age groups come together, *Burks* is more age homogeneous and used mostly by young people (14-19 years old). Both male and female youths visit *Burks* as well as *Kultra.* However, a number of female respondents in our study expressed a sense of discomfort with regard to meeting at *Burks*, in particular in the evening hours. The importance of *Burks* and *Kultra* is especially pronounced during the cold months (in Estonia's case roughly from September to May). In summer, young people prefer meeting outdoors. The streets, the lake, the bus stop, the park, friends' gardens, the old railway dam – all of these places are actively used for interaction, hanging out and partying.

Table 1.

Key meeting places for youths in Järva-Jaani (photos: Elen-Maarja Trell)

Hamburger kiosk (*Burks*)	**House of Culture (*Kultra*)**
	
Location: 'Outskirts'	Location: 'Centre of town'
Not planned for young people	Established by municipality (semi-planned)
Designation: commercial (cafe & store)	Designation: non-commercial hobby clubs (e.g. dancing)
Adults present; no direct supervision	Supervision by adults
No membership	Defined membership
Known locally as youth gathering, party- and drinking-place	Known locally and nationally for dance groups

3.6.1. Kultra: a place of continuity between generations

Kultra is, both literally and symbolically, the central place of Järva-Jaani. In addition to its central location, key social events and celebrations of the local community are held there. According to Habeck (2007: 14), in the Soviet Union and many other socialist countries the 'house of culture' was the 'key institution for cultural activities and the implementation of state cultural policies'. It was a controlled environment created by the authorities for people's leisure activities (Habeck, 2007). For young people in Järva-Jaani K*ultra* also represents a somewhat controlled environment, an environment controlled by adults. *Kultra* is a place where activities are provided for young people by adults who also supervise the activities. These activities, which Pugh and Hart (1999: 57) termed 'adult-sponsored', are mostly extracurricular hobby activities, in which young people interact with each other as well as adults in a more formal context, according to adult norms and values. In their research on youth identity development, Pugh and Hart (1999) found that participation in hobby activities enabled young people to gain self-confidence, explore their interests and values and to find alternative social comparisons through which a change in individual identity was achieved. Our data also confirm a similar influence of hobby activities on youths.

A key activity organized specifically for and by young people (13-18 years old) in *Kultra* is the annual school Christmas gala (Figure 3). In addition to learning new skills by organizing and performing at the gala, the gala provides a context for informal social mixing between the students and their teachers. The gala is a formal event with an evening programme that consists of ballroom dancing, a playback show, a few surprise acts, elections of the ball prince and princess and Christmas presents. The organization of the gala is the responsibility of 10th grade students (16-year-olds) and their class teacher, and involves fund-raising for food and drinks, contacting entertainers and musicians and arranging the evening programme. Organizing the gala is considered an important opportunity for the students to come into contact with different enterpreneurs and businesses, as well as to practise their organizational and performance skills. One month before the gala, a ballroom dancing course is organized, and this culminates in the dancing competition at the gala.

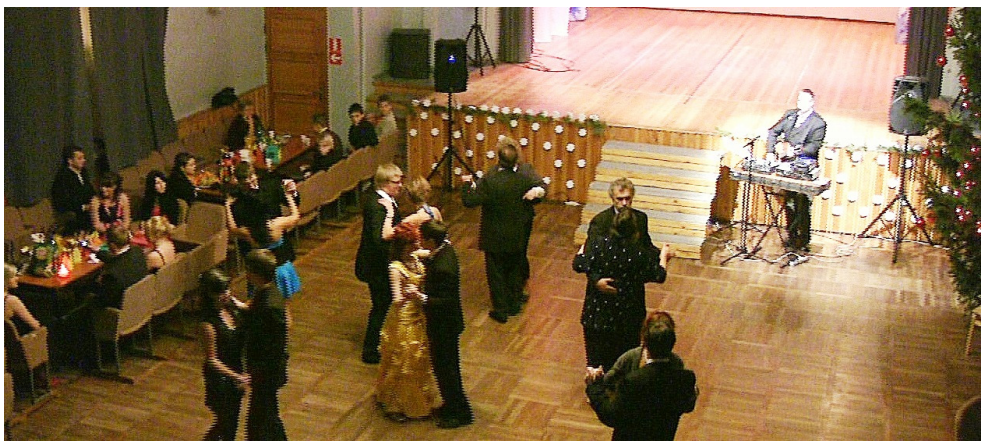

Figure 3. Christmas Gala of the local high school in 2010 (a still from a video file: Elen-Maarja Trell)

Perhaps even more importantly, as the head teacher of the local high school emphasized during an interview, *Kultra* is 'home' to an important local continuity, a Järva-Jaani 'trademark' – its dancing groups.

In 2009, roughly 8% of the entire population of Järva-Jaani municipality were members of the 11 dancing groups that meet and rehearse at *Kultra* (Mõttus, 2009[9]). Children already begin to dance at the age of one, when they dance and perform at *Kultra* together with their mothers. There are a number of dancing groups for older children and for young people. The members in the oldest dancing group are in their 60s. At *Kultra*, dancing is an important factor in people's sense of belonging. Ivo (male, 18), explains:

[9] In 2009, after winning the national school dance festival, a number of interviews were held with the dancers and their instructor by Anu Mõttus, a journalist for the national 'Journal for Teachers', based on which a feature story about Järva-Jaani dancing groups was published.

> ‘Dancers have been active for a very long time here. Old dancers and new, and now everybody dances with everybody … It’s become our tradition. And young people are also interested in it, seeing that older people dance, so they want to do it too. In that way I see lots of good role models and youths really respect them.’

The observation that ‘everybody dances with everybody’ indicates Kultra’s role in connecting generations in Järva-Jaani. While preparing for a shared performance young people meet and work together with the older as well as the younger dancers. But it is not only learning new skills, dancing moves and combinations which motivate young people to join the dancing groups. ‘We dance for the sake of it but also because we want to belong somewhere’, a member of a dancing-group explains (Mõttus 2009). As dancers spend many hours practising together, friendships develop that extend beyond the rehearsal space of *Kultra.* Young people also organize and attend various private and public events together. Kerli (female, 18) says: ‘It’s not that we only dance together, we organize all kinds of nonsense together’. It is important to note that at *Kultra* friendships encompass both genders. For many young people, especially young men, friendship groups and good company are reasons to continue dancing in their teenage years. Madis (male, 19) explains: ‘I have stayed in the dancing group because it’s impossible to leave such a good company’. Eneli (female, 18) adds: ‘We have a great group, we’ve become a family’. ‘We dance for the sake of it but also because we want to belong somewhere’, another member of a dancing group explains (Mõttus 2009).

Whereas other hobby clubs meet in smaller rooms at *Kultra* once or twice a week, the dancers claim the big rehearsal halls almost every day. In 2009, one of the youth dancing groups (16-18-year-olds) became national champions in the annual, prestigious ‘School-dance’ competition (Parts, 2009). Their accomplishments and the recognition of their accomplishments in the media created a sense of pride among young people and the local community (questionnaire). One of the dancers explains, ‘Our greatest accomplishment was winning the national school dance festival, where we showed that dancers from the countryside can also become the best dancers in Estonia’ (Eneli, female, 18).

Shared success and accomplishments play an important role in generating a positive group identity and a sense of belonging. In addition to generating a positive group identity through recognition in the national media (Mõttus, 2009; Postimees, 2009), young people’s rural identity received positive attention. This was mirrored in the survey for this research, as well as in additional interviews with both members and non-members of the dancing groups. As a result, even the young people and adults who were not members of the dancing groups reported the dancing groups to be ‘the pride’ of Järva-Jaani.

Kultra plays an important role in connecting the community, forming a basis for friendship groups and generating a sense of continuity, stability and belonging in Järva-Jaani. However, there is not much space for young people to develop their own activities and unsupervised

interaction at *Kultra*. At *Kultra,* adults are considered the dominant group, who define and control the use(rs) of the place. Hence, young people do not linger at *Kultra* after their class or dance rehearsals. Instead, many of them go to *Burks*, the second site that emerged as an important place for belonging in our research.

3.6.2. Burks: a claimed place of friendship

Burks is not a place that is specifically designated for young people, rather it is chosen by young people themselves as a place where 'you can just relax and interact freely and in a relaxed way' (Andres, male, 16). Our respondents described *Burks* as a place where 'all friends meet', where 'everybody goes', a place where there are 'fun gatherings' and where young people can 'chill', 'just be' and 'hang out' (peer-led interviews; questionnaire) (see Figure 4). By hanging out and interacting in an informal atmosphere, friendships and friendship groups are created and maintained. Andres explains:

> 'I think *Burks* is one of the most important places for youths in Järva-Jaani. Otherwise [if *Burks* was not there] young people couldn't really relax anywhere and interact properly and enjoy their free time' (male, 16).

Figure 4. Young people having lunch in the backroom of Burks (photo: Elen-Maarja Trell)

Young people use *Burks* differently depending on the time of day. During the day young people usually go there alone or with a few friends to eat. In the evening, larger groups of young people gather, for example after a dance or football training, to watch a movie, play

pool, eat or drink. When compared to *Kultra*, *Burks* does not have much to offer to youths in terms of organized activities and transferable skills. The location of *Burks* – on the outskirts of the town and next to the motorway – and its accessibility, also in the evening hours, seem to be its main appeal for young people.

First of all, *Burks* is the only social place in Järva-Jaani open to the public on weekdays after 19.00 (grocery stores are an exception). At *Burks,* young people can spend time together until 22.00 (23.00 in summer). Whereas adults can comfortably retreat to the confines of their houses, it is more difficult for young people to go about their own business and relax (also at home) without the interference of their parents. *Burks* is therefore a place that young people frequently visit in the evening and thus claim as a youth place. Sander (male, 18) describes the minimal adult supervision and the dynamics of youth-adult interaction at *Burks* as follows:

> 'In general it was like that – when a bunch of young people showed up [at *Burks*] then the adults would go and sit somewhere else. […] Usually young people are in the back room, the adults move to the front. There are a few adults who interact with young people [in *Burks*] also, but only when they have been drinking, then they would make jokes and talk. But mostly not.'

Secondly, due to its location on the margins, *Burks* is a place where rules are more flexible and more easily transgressed (see Anderson 2009). Combined with the late opening hours and the availability of alcohol, it is not surprising that *Burks* is also associated with deviant behaviour, such as underage drinking and fighting (questionnaire; interviews). Friendship groups adhere to certain entry criteria and behavioural rules and expectations. In the evening, the attitude towards drinking alcohol seems to be a key criterion for determining who belongs. The desire to belong combined with the availability of alcohol, the lack of supervision and the accessibility of *Burks* in the evening can thus also create a potentially harmful environment for young people and can damage their future prospects.

The lack of adult supervision and control can, however, also be a positive influence, as research by Glendinning et al. (2003) illustrates. Gledinning et al. (2003) found that being constantly visible and controlled by their small community was a common cause for depression among rural adolescents (see also Glendinning and West, 2007). The importance of *Burks* in providing an environment that offers relaxation and privacy should therefore also not be underestimated.

The proximity of the motorway passing through Järva-Jaani is an additional factor which makes *Burks* a dynamic and exciting place for young people. Besides meeting peers and local people, there are opportunities to meet strangers and people from different backgrounds, who pass through Järva-Jaani and stop at *Burks* for food or drinks. Therefore, *Burks* is considered by youths as a place where (unexpected) 'things happen' (Ott, male, 17). As the research by Weller (2006) indicates, for young people in particular, one of the key qualities

for choosing places to hang out at is the possibility of things happening, especially things which would be out of the ordinary and exciting. As a place of consumption, a place where people from many different backgrounds come together, a place to see strangers, a place which is not strictly supervised by parents, *Burks* fills a function of a semi-autonomous hang-out place which the youth in cities often find in, for example, the mall.

To sum up, *Burks* seems to have multiple influences on young people's lives. On the one hand the availability of alcohol combined with the lack of supervision and the accessibility of *Burks* in the evening hours create a potentially harmful environment for young people and can damage their future prospects. On the other hand, it is one of the few places where young people can form relations and friendship groups in a relaxed environment, away from the supervision of adults. It is a key place where 'friendship ties are strengthened' (Ott, male, 17). Friendships and friendship groups are relevant to young people in their transition to adulthood.These provide young people with various forms of emotional and social support and are major sources of knowledge and understanding (see Jeffrey and McDowell, 2004).

3.6.3. Belonging and future

In the period following the pilot project in Järva-Jaani (2009-2010), four of our research participants (out of nine) continued their studies at the local high school, three graduated and continued their education at universities and in vocational higher education in bigger cities (Tallinn, Tartu and Pärnu), one did not graduate but moved to Tallinn for work, and one moved to Tallinn to finish high school in an adult education/evening school. In the follow-up interviews, a year after moving away all of the participants reported having good and strong contacts with Järva-Jaani. They continued to visit Järva-Jaani on a monthly basis and took part in key events such as the annual school Christmas gala at *Kultra*. One of the research participants illustrates his connection to Järva-Jaani a year after moving to Tallinn:

> ´Well, I could visit Järva-Jaani about four times this summer. And I can say that those moments were more meaningful to me, even just walking along the village street, these moments were more meaningful to me than anything that I have done in Tallinn this whole summer' (Ivo, male, 19).

The lives of our research participants reflect a more general trend among Järva-Jaani youth. The questionnaires revealed that more than 80% (n=38) of the respondents had strong positive feelings towards their hometown and towards living in the countryside in general. Typical answers to the question 'how do you feel about living in Järva-Jaani?' included: 'It's my home, people are good and friendly, and this makes me feel good' (female, 16) 'Everybody is a friend, if I have troubles everyone helps out' (male, 18) 'I have basically lived here all my life and it's a good place, nice, dear to me and I have friends here' (female, 19). Although most of the respondents expressed a desire to stay connected to their home places and community, only 13% (n=6) of the respondents were planning to stay in Järva-Jaani after graduating from high school. The most important reason for leaving was the lack of

opportunities to find work, but also to achieve something in, for example, sports or studies. Answers such as 'there is no future in Järva-Jaani' (female, 19), 'better jobs are elsewhere' (male, 15), 'I have to go away because I want to continue my studies' (female, 19) and 'there is nothing to do here as an adult' (male, 18) illustrate youth perceptions of their future in Järva-Jaani. In sum, our data indicate that, although young people's access to and practices in very specific places of belonging (*Kultra/Burks*) feed into a wider sense of attachment to Järva-Jaani, this is ambiguous, because they do not see a future there.

3.7. Conclusion

In the broader context of post-socialist transition and rural decline, we have examined the everyday lives of young people in rural Estonia in this paper. We argued that in times of uncertainty, which are experienced by young people in rural areas of Estonia in particular, the role of everyday places that provide security and a basis for belonging should not be underestimated. By focusing on the everyday context we further explored whether a more nuanced picture of continuities and discontinuities associated with post-socialist transition could be revealed. In a case study conducted in Järva-Jaani, we have examined youth key places of belonging - a local House of Culture, K*ultra,* and a hamburger kiosk, B*urks*. Our data suggest that *Kultra* and *Burks* play an important role in providing a sense of belonging to Järva-Jaani, by strengthening both connections to the older generation and friendship ties with peers.

In the Soviet Union and particularly in its rural areas, Habeck (2007) argues, the House of Culture constituted an important space for social interaction beyond the family and the work collective. The central role of *Kultra* in Järva-Jaani life indicates that the establishment has, at least to some extent, retained its function as a meeting place and important place for self-expression, also for the younger generation. Our data indicate, in contrast to Habeck's findings (2007) that the House of Culture was not perceived by youths as a dull or 'uncool' place. Instead, they were proud to engage in activities at *Kultra. Kultra* was associated with positive achievements and public recognition which profoundly affected young people's sense of belonging to and pride in their community and their willingness to engage in local life. Places that provide young people with such experiences are especially relevant in rural areas, which are often portrayed by negative stereotypes. While visiting *kultra* young people engaged in activities which cross generations and interacted with both, peers and adults. As such, in Järva-Jaani *Kultra* is perhaps a place which symbolically forms a bridge with the past. However, it is not a place which forms a bridge to the Soviet past, rather a bridge between members of the older and younger generations.

Claiming one's own places and having a sense of control in a place is an important part of affirming a shared identity and belonging (Hay 1998). Each place carries in it an explicit power-geometry. Some people/groups are more in charge of specific places than others. Our findings indicate that at *Kultra* adults are the dominant group. The legal and societal status

of adulthood affords adults in general more influence, a greater voice and more freedom of action in the use of places (and the definition of barriers to places) (Hay, 1998). In 'protecting' adult places, symbolic and physical mechanisms of exclusion, such as signs (or the 'mosquito'[10]-device) in shops, parks or on the streets, to control young people's presence and behavior are used. Finding places of their own in which to meet and interact is therefore argued to be a challenge for young people, especially in a small rural community where individuals are extremely visible (see Glendinning et al., 2003). The role of *Burks* as a place of unsupervised interaction with peers should therefore not be ignored. Our findings indicate that *Burks* is a key place in which friendships are formed and maintained and where young people can simply relax. Although young people used this location for lunch, to hang out, play pool and so on, a number of stories revealed *Burks* as a place where underage drinking takes place. Although young people shaped their stories in ways that interpreted the use of alcohol in positive ways, there are concerns about the role of *Burks* as well.

The lives of our research participants illustrate that the context of post-socialist Estonia is indeed characterized by numerous discontinuities at the broader, national level. The fact that many young people move away from Järva-Jaani after graduating from high school indicates that the structural discontinuities, for example, the lack of employment, education or leisure opportunities in rural areas in particular, influence the lives and futures of young people. However, our data indicate that there are important continuities present in the everyday lives of rural youths'.

Places of belonging, experiences and skills learned there, as well as informal social ties formed, were found to provide rural young people with a stable basis to form their own identities, connect to the older generation, form friendships with peers and deal with global uncertainties. Reliance on local informal ties for support and access to resources was common in socialist times as well, mainly for small rural communities (Abbott et al., 2010). Our findings indicate that in the context of rural Estonia, the local community continues to fulfill an important support function and is influential for young people both for migration to the city and for staying connected, feeling grounded in and possibly returning to their rural homes. Older friends and relatives who had left Järva-Jaani, inspired young people to move away, by showing that it is possible to live in the city. In addition, existing contacts in the city were considered resources of support and were utilized by young people in order to find work or a place to live in the city. Similar tendencies have been noted in other post-socialist countries (see Roberts et al., 2000; Glendinning et al., 2004; White, 2007; Walker, 2010). Glendinning et al. (2004: 39), for example, found prospects for migration amongst young people in rural parts of Novosibirsk Oblast' – in Siberia to be fundamentally tied to their

[10] A high-pitched sound device, audible only to young people, used in shops, on the street outside shops and cafes, or in residential areas. Also called 'anti-teen device' as its sound deters youths from gathering in areas in the vicinity of the 'mosquito', and therefore it helps to disperse groups of young people (Naughton, 2009).

kinship networks, and suggested that the assistance of siblings who had already moved away was a crucial resource.

While some authors (e.g. Kovatchava, 2002; Machácek, 1998) have seen young people in general as losers in the post-socialist transformation, this paper also stresses the positive resources available to youth, especially in view of their local daily realities. Our findings thus illustrate that it is fruitful to focus on the everyday level, as a more nuanced, and in the case of young people in rural Estonia, a more optimistic, picture of 'actually existing post-socialism'(Stenning and Hörschelmann, 2008, 314), and the associated continuities as well as discontinuities, may be revealed.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the research participants for sharing their lives with us. We would also like to thank everybody at the local high school for the warm welcome and assistance during the data collection. Special thanks are extended to Mr. Kristjan Piirimäe, Mrs. Sirje Pehk, Mrs. Silva Kärner and Mr. Arto Saar for hosting the research and for the support during and after the fieldwork, and to our colleague, Dr. Christian Zuidema for his support throughout the process of writing this paper. The authors would furthermore like to thank three anonymous referees and the editors of this special issue for their valuable comments on the earlier versions of this paper. Tamara Kaspers-Westra kindly helped to prepare the map of Järva-Jaani. This project would not have been possible without the financial support from the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen.

REFERENCES

Abbott, P., Wallace, C., Mascauteanu, M. and Sapsford, R., 2010. Concepts of citizenship, social and system integration among young people in post-Soviet Moldova', Journal of Youth Studies, 13: 5, 581-596.

Altman, I., Low, S.M., 1992. Place Attachment. New York, Plenum Press.

Anderson, J., 2009. Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces. London, Routledge, Tyler & Francis group.

Åslund, A., 2002. Building capitalism: the transformation of the former Soviet bloc. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Atav, S., Spencer, G., 2002. Health Risk Behaviors among Adolescents Attending Rural, Suburban, and Urban Schools: A Comparative Study. Family & Community Health 25:2, 53-64.

Bahro, R. 1979. The Alternative in Eastern Europe. London: New Left Books.

Benedicto, J., Moran, M.L., 2007. Becoming a citizen. Analysing the social representations of citizenship in youth. European Societies 9:4, 601 – 622.

Bonnes, M., Lee, T., Bonaiuto M., (eds) 2003. Psychological Theories for Environmental Issues. Aldershot, Ashgate.

Brown, G. and Raymond, C., 2007. The relationship between place attachment and landscape values. Applied geography, 27(2), 89 -111.

Campbell, K.B., 2005. Theorizing the Authentic. Identity, Engagement, and Public Space. Administration & Society 36:6, 688-705.

Cele, S., 2006. Communicating place, methods for understanding children's experiences of place. Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell International.

Erikson, E.H., 1968. Identity: youth and crisis. New York, Norton.

Estonian Human Development Report 2009. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & AS Eesti Ajalehed.

Estonian Human Asset Report 2010. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & Committee for Sustainable Development.

Estonian Ministry of Agriculture 2007. Estonian Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 [Eesti Maaelu Arengukava 2007-2013]. Tallinn: Estonian Ministry of Agriculture.

Estonian National Institute for Health Development 2004. Estonian Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) Country Report. Tallinn, Estonian National Institute for Health Development.

European Commission 2011. Estonia and the Euro. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/countries/estonia_en.htm. Visited at: 14.08.2011.

Felski, R., 1999. The invention of everyday life. New Formations, 39, 13-31.

Fried, M., 2000. Continuities and discontinuities of place. Journal of Environmental Psychology 20, 193– 205.

Glendinning, A., Nuttall, M., Hendry, L., Kloep, M., Wood, S., 2003. Rural communities and well-being: a good place to grow up? The Sociological Review 51(1), 129-156.

Glendinning, A., Pak, O. and Popkov, Yu., 2004. Youth, Community Life and Well-being in Rural Areas of Siberia. Sibirica, 4:1, 31–48.

Glendinning, A. and West, 2007. Young people's mental health in context: Comparing life in the city and small communities in Siberia. Social Science & Medicine 65, 1180–1191.

Gorz, B., Kurek, W., 2000. The population of the Polish countryside: demography and living conditions. GeoJournal 50:2/3, 101-104.

Gylfason, T. and Hochreiter, E., 2009. Growing apart? A tale of two republics: Estonia and Georgia. European Journal of Political Economy, 25(3), 355-370.

Habeck, J.O., 2007. Enacting 'culture' and 'culturedness': why people may or may not want to spend their free time in the House of Culture. kultura: Russian Cultural Review, 1, 14-18.

Habeck, J.O., 2009. Does life make more sense now? Young people's life projects and the new feeling of stability in Russia. Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore, 41, 189-206.

Hart, R.A., 1997. Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care. New York and London: Unicef and Earthscan Publications Limited.

Hay, R., 1998. A rooted sense of place in cross-cultural perspective. Canadian Geographer 42, 245–266.

Heath, S., Brooks, R., Cleaver, E., Ireland, E., 2009. Researching young people's lives. London, Sage.

Van Hoven, B. (ed.), 2004. Europe- Lives in transition. London, Prentice Hall.

Van Hoven, B. and Pfaffenbach, C., 2002. Labour markets in transition. The experiences of women in two border regions of East Germany. GeoJournal 56, 261-269.

Hörschelmann, K., 2002. History after the end: post-socialist difference in a (post)modern world. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 27(1), 52-66.

Hörschelmann, K., Van Hoven, B., 2003. Experiencing displacement: the transformation of women's spaces in (former) East Germany. Antipode 35:4, 742-760.

Hörschelmann, K., Schäfer, N., 2005. Performing the global through the local - globalization and individualization in the spatial practices of young East Germans. Children's Geographies 3(2), 219-242.

Jeffrey, C., McDowell, L., 2004. Youth in a comparative perspective. Global change, local lives. Youth & Society 36(2), 131-142.

Järva-Jaani municipality development plan for 2009-2015, 2008. http://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=13090293. Visited at: 16.10.2010.

Järvamaa information portal, 2010. http://jol.cma.ee/?action=article&CatID=1512&ArtID=40092. Visited at: 31.10.2010.

Jõeveer, J., 2003. Siserände vanuserisused [Internal migration by age]. In Tammaru, T., Kulu H., (Eds) Ränne üleminekuaja Eestis [Migration in Estonia during the transition period]. Tallinn, Statistics Estonia.

Kay, R. 2012. Managing everyday (in)securities: normative values, emotional security and symbolic recognition in the lives of Russian rural elders. Journal of Rural Studies [Volume, pp. TBC]

Kellett, M., Forrest, R., Dent, N., Ward, S., 2004. Just teach us the skills please, we'll do the rest: empowering ten-year-olds as active researchers. Children & Society 18, 329-343.

Korpela, K. and Hartig, T., 1996. Restorative qualities of favorite places. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 16, 221-233.

Kovacheva, S., 2002. The social construction of youth in late post-communism. In: Lagree, J.C. (ed) Rolling youth, rocking society. Youth take part in the post-modern debate on globalization. UNESCO.Lauristin, M., 2003. Social Contradictions Shadowing Estonia's 'Success Story.' Demokratizatsiya 11(4), 601 – 616.

Leatherdale, S.T., Hammond, D.G., Kaiserman, M., Ahmed, R., 2007. Marijuana and tobacco use among young adults in Canada: are they smoking what we think they are smoking? Cancer Causes Control 18, 391-397.

Lugus, O. and Hachey, G. A. (eds), 1995. Transforming the Estonian economy. Tallinn: International Center for Economic growth.

Machácek, L., 1998. Youth in the Processes of Transition and Modernisation in Slovak Republic. Czech Sociological Review 6(1), 103-115.

Manzo, L. C., 2005. For Better or Worse: Exploring the Multiple Dimensions of Place Meaning. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 25(1), 67-86.

Musil, J., 1993. The transition to democracy. In O'loughlin, J. and Van der Wusten, H. (eds) The new political geography of Eastern Europe. London: John Wiley and Sons.

Mõttus, A., 2009. Ülle Vaas ja tema tantsukogukond. In Journal for Teachers [Õpetajate Leht], 2009. http://www.opleht.ee/?archive_mode=article&articleid=1801&print=1. Visited at: 1.11.2010.

Nakhshina, M. (2012) 'Everything here is thanks to fish': attitudes to salmon and identification with place in a Russian coastal village. Journal of Rural Studies [Volume, pp. TBC]

Naughton, P., 2009. Kids' commissioner calls for ban on Mosquito, ultrasonic anti-teen device. In Times Online *http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article3356157.ece* Visited at 18.01.2011.

Nugin, R., 2008. Constructing adulthood in a world of uncertainties. Some cases of post-Communist Estonia

Osterman, K.F., 2000. Students' Need for Belonging in the School Community. Review of Educational Research 70(3), 323-367.

Panagiotou, R.A., 2001. Estonia's success: prescription or legacy? Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 34(2), 261-277.

Parts, P., 2009. Järva-Jaani noorte tants pälvis «Koolitantsul» esikoha. http://www.jt.ee/?id=108908 Visited at 18.01.2011.

Piaget, J., 1965. The Moral Judgment of the Child. New York, Free Press.

Pickles, J. and Smith, A. (Eds) 1998. Theorising transition. The political economy of post-communist transformations. London: Routledge.

Postimees [national daily newspaper], 2009. Koolitants. http://koolitants.postimees.ee/?id=109307. Visited at: 31.01.2011.

Pretty, G.H., Heather, M.C., Bramston, P., 2003. Sense of place amongst adolescents and adults in two rural Australian towns: The discriminating features of place attachment, sense of community and place dependence in relation to place identity. Journal of Environmental Psychology 23, 273–287.

Pugh, M.J.V., Hart, D., 1999. Identity Development and Peer Group Participation. New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development 84, 55-70.

Putnam, R.D., 2000. Bowling Alone. New York, Simon & Schuster.

Regional Portrait of Estonia: Järvamaa, 2010. Statistics Estonia http://www.stat.ee/ppe-jarva-maakond. Visited at 1.11.2010.

Resnick, M., Bearman, P.S., Blum, R.W., Bauman, K.E., Harris, K.M., Jones, J., Tabor, J., Beuhring, T., Sieving, R.E., Shew, M., Ireland, M., Bearinger, L.H., Udry, J.R., 1997. Protecting adolescents from harm. JAMA 278(10), 823-832.

Roberts, K., Clark, S. C., Fagan, C. and Tholen, J., 2000. Surviving Post-Communism: Young People in the Former Soviet Union. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Rubenstein, R.L. and Parmalee, P.A., 1992. Attachment to place and the representation of the life course by the elderly. In Altman, I. and Low, S. (eds) *Place Attachment,* (eds) New York: Plenum Press, 1992, 139-165.

Rye, J.F., 2006. Rural youths' images of the rural. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 409–421.

Saar, E., 2008. Different Cohorts and Evaluation of Income Differences in Estonia. International Sociology 23: 417-445.

Saarniit, J., 1999. Estonian Rural Young People. In Helve H (ed.) A Comparative Study of Living Conditions and Participation of Rural Young People in Changing Europe. European Commission (RYPE) report, pp. 8-20.

Sachs, J., 1994. Poland's jump to the market economy. London: MIT Press.

Smith, A. and Pickles, J. 1998. Theorising transition and the political economy of transformation. In Pickles, J. and Smith, A. (Eds) Theorising transition. The political economy of post-communist transformations, pp. 1-22.

Statistics Estonia, 2009. Migration [Ränne]. Tallinn, Statistics Estonia.

Statistics Estonia, 2010a. Estonian economic activities are concentrated into three counties [Eesti majandustegevus on koondunud peamiselt kolme maakonda]. http://www.stat.ee/37903. Visited at 1.11.2010.

Statistics Estonia, 2010b. www.stat.ee. Visited at: 16.10.2010.

Tooming, U., 2010. Tallinna elanike arv kasvas aastaga 2698 inimese võrra. Tallinna Postimees http://www.tallinnapostimees.ee/?id=210942. Visited at: 1.11.2010.

Stenning, A. and Hörschelmann, K., 2008. History, geography and difference in the post-socialist world: Or, do we still need post-socialism? Antipode 40(2), 312-335

Thelen, T., Dorondel, S., Szöke, A. and Vetters, L., 2011. 'The sleep has been rubbed from their eyes': social citizenship and the reproduction of local hierarchies in rural Hungary and Romania. Citizenship Studies, 15(3): 513-527.

Trell, E-M., Van Hoven, B., 2010. Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods together with young people. Fennia 188(1), 91-104.

Trell, E-M., Van Hoven, B., 2011. Place attachment in rural areas: a participatory research project with youth in Cedar, British Columbia. In ten Toonder, J. M.L. (ed.) Re-exploring Canadian Space / Redécouvrir l'espace canadien. Groningen: Barkhuis Press, Canada Cahiers.

Trumm, A., 2006. Recent developments of Estonia's social protection system. Background Paper Prepared for the EU 8 Social Inclusion Study. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECONEVAL/Resources/EstoniaSocialPolicyReview.pdf. Visited at: 18.01.2011.

Twigger-Ross, C., Bonaiuto, M., Breakwell, G., 2003. Identity Theories and Environmental Psychology. In Bonnes, M., Lee, T., Bonaiuto, M. (Eds.) Psychological Theories For Environmental Issues. Aldershot, Ashgate, pp. 203-233.

Unwin, T., 1998. Rurality and the construction of nation in Estonia. In Pickles, J. and Smith, A. (Eds) Theorising transition. The political economy of post-communist transformations, pp. 284-306.

Unwin, T., Pallot, J., Johnson, S., 2004. Rural change and agriculture. In Bradshaw, M., Stenning, A. (Eds.) East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. Essex, Pearson.

Valentine, G., 2001. At the drawing board: developing a research design. In Limb, M., Dwyer, C., (Eds.) Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers. Issues and Debates. London: Arnold, pp. 41-54.

Valentine, G., Holloway, S., Knell, C., Jayne, M., 2008. Drinking places: Young people and cultures of alcohol consumption in rural environments. Journal of Rural Studies 24, 28-40.

Walker, C., 2010. Space, Kinship Networks and Youth Transition in Provincial Russia: Negotiating Urban-Rural and Inter-Regional Migration. Europe-Asia Studies, 62(4), 647-669.

Walker, C. and Stephenson, S., 2010. Youth and social change in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Journal of Youth Studies, 13(5), 521-532.

Weller, S., 2006. Teenagers' citizenship: experiences and education. New York: Routledge.

White, A., 2007. Internal Migration Trends in Soviet and Post-Soviet European Russia. Europe-Asia Studies, 59: 6, 887–911.

White, A., 2010. Young people and migration from contemporary Poland. Journal of Youth Studies, 13(5), 565-580.

World Bank 2008. Lumiste, R., Pefferly, R. and Purju, A. (eds). Estonia’s Economic Development: Trends, Practices, and Sources. Washington: Commission on Growth and Development.

Chapter 4

YOUTH NEGOTIATION AND PERFORMANCE OF MASCULINE IDENTITIES IN RURAL ESTONIA[1]

Abstract

This paper explores key shared places and practices through which young men in rural Estonia perform and construct masculine identities. Whereas powerful images of rural places and rural masculinity exist and are reproduced in public discourse in Estonia, not much is known about how masculinities are constructed by the 'real' rural men living in the countryside. In this paper, we draw on a participatory research project and focus on the everyday lives and places of young rural men in order to illustrate how masculine identity emerges in situated practice and interaction. Our findings show that rural gender identities are relational, dynamic and multi-faceted. The young rural men in our study actively performed different aspects of masculinities *in relation to* available physical resources and social groups. Our findings suggest that the young men are in the process of exploring a multiplicity of different ways of how to be a rural man while actively negotiating the rural context.

Keywords: masculinity; young people; identity performance; affordances; rural Estonia.

[1] Chapter based on: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P.P.P., 2011. ''It's a place where all friends meet. Shared places, youth friendships and the negotiation of masculine identities in rural Estonia'. RGS-IBG, August 2011, London. Accepted, subject to revisions, by an international, peer-reviewed journal.

> ‘If there are only two paths for the boys in Estonia, either winning the Olympic Gold or buying vodka for mom’s pension, then things are bad indeed. Couldn’t we include a handy middle-class family man somewhere in-between as a respectable option for being a young man?’ (Aavik, 2013).

4.1. Introduction

In public discourse in Estonia, rural men are often represented as marginalized losers. ‘Rural men are all dumb,’ sings Vaiko Eplik, a popular Estonian rock musician. Eplik’s song speaks of his disappointment at seeing the male population of rural Estonia destroy itself with alcohol abuse, violence and high-speed cars (Alas, 2007). In a similar vein, a popular short film ‘Alien’ (‘Tulnukas’) from 2006, which has earned a cult status amongst young people in both Estonia and abroad, depicts rural Estonian men as reckless short-sighted ‘rednecks’ (Alas, 2007). The biggest newspapers of Estonia talk about the typical rural man – the middle-aged, unemployed and unmotivated male, living with his parents and often dealing with an alcohol problem (Tamm, 2010; Eesti Ekspress, 2010; Aavik, 2013).

Whereas powerful images of rural places and rural masculinity exist and are reproduced in public discourse in Estonia, not much attention has been paid to how ‘real’ men living in the countryside construct masculine identities and which kinds of masculinities are constructed. The representations of rural men seem to ascribe what Stenbacka (2011: 243) termed a ’non-negotiable rural identity’, overlooking the agency of rural men in adapting and re-creating different facets of masculinity and the multiplicity of (changing) relations and places through which rural masculinities are lived out and negotiated. For example, with the decline in traditional masculine work in rural areas, *young* rural men in particular do not necessarily stay ‘stuck’ in traditional ways of performing gender identity but are rather likely to construct alternative and more flexible masculinities.

Whereas traditionally hard physical labor, mastering the technology or nature in the context of a farm, were key sites for the construction and affirmation of the ‘tough’ rural masculine identity (Cloke, 2005), today it is not uncommon for rural men to work in health or care sectors and perform what Bye (2009: 286) termed ‘caring masculinities’. Furthermore, Bye's research (2009) in rural Norway highlights that ‘real’ men living in rural areas do not only or predominantly construct their masculine identities in relation to (traditional) work but also emphasize their role as fathers or perform masculinity through hobby activities. Rural masculinity is hence not static but dynamic, continuously constructed and negotiated in different spaces and through different social relationships.

In this paper, then, while acknowledging the influence of broader economic and social processes on the rural context as well as on gender identities, we emphasize the role of everyday social relations and places in the negotiation of rural gender identities. Our aim is not to present an exhaustive picture of rural masculinities but rather to argue that rural

masculinities are multi-faceted and constantly created and re-created in a variety of ways in everyday life, in relation to available physical and social resources. Drawing on Butler (1990), we consider masculine identity as a performance that emerges in situated practice and interaction rather than being an ascribed and static notion of social difference. In line with Hopkins and Pain (2007), we explore gender identity as a relational practice and pay attention to the specific effects generated by intersections of masculinity and other markers of social identity. In this paper young people's environments are conceptualized as a mix of physical and social affordances that can potentially be used for and influence the construction and performance of gendered identities (Gibson, 1979).

In the remainder of this paper we will first address three theoretical contexts relevant to the analysis of our data: gender-identity as a relational performance, social and physical factors influencing identity performance and spatial and temporal variation in identity performance. We will focus in particular on resources for identity construction available for young men (16-18 years old) in their (rural) environments. After introducing our research location, participants and methods of data collection, we examine practices in three places which emerged as key shared places of interaction for our research participants: boat trips on different rivers across Estonia; parties at home and friends' places; and dancing at the House of Culture. In the context of these places, we explore how masculinities are constructed in relation to different groups, i.e. adults, girls and urban males, and to different physical characteristics of each place.

4.2. The construction of gender-identity: masculinity as a relational performance

Butler (1990) argues that gender is not a given static structure, but rather a performance that is enacted continually at specific social sites. Butler (1990) sees gender as multiple, perfomatively constituted and in a constant flux. Within their everyday lives and local places, people constantly (re)define themselves and negotiate their identities in interaction with others (Hopkins and Pain 2007). Lysaght (2002: 59) illustrates that different audiences, locations and circumstances can 'ensure a highly divergent and even contradictory performance'. Lysaght (2002) observed men in her research continually shifting between what she calls 'dominant' and 'subordinate' masculinities depending on their location in either their relatively safe residential communities in Belfast or outside these boundaries. When gender is conceptualized as something that individuals 'do', in contrast to something that they are (or are born into), gender is viewed as relational, contingent and subject to transformation depending upon locational and positional change (Lysaght 2002; van Hoven and Hörschelmann, 2005; Hopkins and Pain 2007).

The social context and the physical setting are the key factors influencing the performance of gender identities (Lysaght 2002; Hopkins 2006; Bye 2009). First, the social agents, the participants as well as the 'audience' have an influence on gender performances (Lysaght

2002). In their research with teenage boys in London, Pattman et al. (2005) found that boys were presenting themselves in different and at times contradictory ways depending on the gender composition of the interview-group. According to Pattman et al. (2005), the presence of girls in mixed-gender interviews made the boys feel comfortable to present themselves as more sensitive and critical towards for example bullying than in male-only interviews. In a different context, Hopkins (2006) demonstrates the relationship between gender negotiation and age. His findings show that young Muslim men perform a different kind of masculinity in the presence of their fathers as compared to when they are with peers (Hopkins 2006). Second, the physical location or the 'arena' of the performance can favor certain types of performances over others (cf. research on prison masculinities by van Hoven, 2011). Nature and the outdoors, for example, provide a context where men can demonstrate their ability to cope with extreme weather conditions and hostile landscapes or to 'control' the environment (Saugeres, 2002; Little 2002; Little and Panelli, 2007). Particularly within the rural context, (hu)man-nature interaction is found to play an important role in the construction of powerful ideas about masculinity (Cloke, 2005). A respondent in Bye's (2009: 282) study, for example, pointed out that in rural Norway 'If you, as a man, are not interested in hunting and the outdoors, it can be a real problem'.

In this paper, we also draw on Gibson's (1979) theory of affordances as a starting point for exploring relations between identity performance and space. Gibson (1979) argues that elements in the environment have functional significance for individuals and can afford various opportunities for action and interaction. Gibson (1979) terms this significance and the resulting opportunities '*affordances*'. Affordances can be physical, such as a stream affording water and cooling, but can also be social, for example the presence of other people affording opportunities for social interaction, playing or nurturing (Clark and Uzzell 2002). For example, in their study of adolescent places Clark and Uzzell (2002) compared the affordances of town center, neighborhood, school and home. They found that in contrast to the town center and the neighborhood, the home as a closed indoor environment shared with family, did not afford young people opportunities for social interaction (Clark and Uzzell 2002). Instead, the home environment had the most affordances for different types of retreat, retreat together with close friends and retreat involving security-seeking (Clark and Uzzell 2002; cf. Trell and van Hoven, 2012).

The above outlines gender identity as a *relational practice*. However, when focusing on the ways in which individuals perform and construct their identities within multiple relations and spaces, it is relevant to remember that each place carries in it a particular power-geometry. Individuals are thus never completely free to do or enact anything they want.

4.3. Multiple ways of being a man

Focusing on the ways in which individuals perform and construct multiple identities, Valentine (2007: 19) sounds a note of caution about not underestimating how the 'ability to

enact some identities or realities rather than others is highly contingent on the power-laden spaces in and through which our experiences are lived'. In the case of young people, for example, *age* is an important factor influencing their use of and behaviour in their environments. Hopkins and Pain (2007: 288) point out that 'people have different access to and experiences of places on the grounds of their age, and spaces associated with certain age groups influences who uses them and how'. Compared to young people, the legal and societal status of adulthood affords adults more influence, a greater voice and more freedom of action in the use of places (and the definition of barriers to places) (Hay 1998). In 'protecting' adult places, public and commercial space or town centers in particular, young people's presence and behavior is often controlled using symbolic and physical mechanisms of exclusion, such as signs or the 'mosquito'[2] device (see for example Trell and van Hoven, 2012). As a result, a town center or a mall does not offer all social groups same kinds of resources or amount of freedom of action and interaction. Young men thus have different resources, opportunities and restrictions for negotiating masculinities than their older counterparts.

Furthermore, although in contemporary Western societies individuals seem to have more opportunities than ever before to choose their identity, it does not mean they are completely free to choose anything they wish (Bye 2009). Connell (1987) emphasized that there exist hierarchies of masculinities which place more value on some expressions of masculinity than others. Powerful ideas about what is appropriate in a specific location and social context at a particular time underlie and influence identity performances. For example, in different settings there seem to be specific versions of masculinity which are 'recognized and validated, or indeed judged as lacking by the surrounding audience' (Lysaght 2002: 59). In his research on masculinity and drinking in rural New Zealand Campbell (2000: 562), for example, found that successful performance of pub(lic) masculinity, in the pub, at evening hours, was dependent upon a man's ability to engage in 'conversational cockfighting' and 'the disciplines of drinking' (cf. van Campenhout and van Hoven, forthcoming). Those characteristics were relevant as they ensured that a particular dominant version of rural masculinity reproduced itself. The research by Campbell (2000) illustrates that ideas about appropriate ways of doing gender can have powerful capacities to include or exclude individuals from specific groups or places, to create or foreclose opportunities (cf. McDowell, 2003).

However, Connell (1995) argues that hegemonic masculinity is not unchanging. The power relations between different aspects of masculinity are spatially and temporarily specific and also subject to challenge and change (Berg and Longhurst, 2003; Brandt and Haugen, 2005).

[2] A high-pitched sound device, audible only to young people, used in shops, on the street outside shops and cafes, or in residential areas. Also called 'anti-teen device' as its sound puts the youth off from gathering in areas in the vicinity of the Mosquito and therefore it helps to disperse groups of young people (Times Online 2009).

For example, Brandt and Haugen (2005) point out that the masculinity often assumed to be hegemonic was traditionally connected to typically rural assets, places and practices. However, 'with a growing emphasis on urban as the only possible future path, a hegemonic masculinity today does not involve the rural but to a greater extent sees the rural as deviant' (Stenbacka, 2011: 237). The research by McDowell (2000:206) indicates that, more specifically, it is the aspects of masculinity, typically associated with hard physical labour (and by extension rural areas), that are less valued in today's service-oriented economy. As a result of economic restructuring and changes in the labour market in the past decades, 'older forms of acceptable 'macho' behaviour among working-class men, once a key feature of male manual employment, are now a positive disadvantage in the labour market' McDowell (2000:206) argues. Instead, other characteristics, such as deference and docility, are highly valued skills in the service sector jobs, which are becoming increasingly important for the working-class (McDowell, 2000). Although the research by McDowell (2003) focuses on young men in the urban context, similar changes influence young men in rural areas (cf. Brandth and Haugen, 2000). Brandth and Haugen (2000), for instance, found that, as a result of increased international competition and new regulations in the forest industry in rural Norway, the 'tough' logger masculine culture has lost hegemony and given way to a managerial culture and masculinity.

Variation of the power relations between different (aspects of) masculinities across time and space may lead to different expressions of masculinitiy[3] (Berg and Longhurst, 2003). Recent research focusing on the rural context, emphasizes the reflexive and flexible identities that are to be found in rural areas today and the ways in which young rural men in particular break with hegemonic conventions for how they should be as men (Kenway et al., 2006; Bye, 2009). The research by Bye (2009), for example, indicates that, in rural Norway, alternative ways to express masculinity, which may include elements that introduce features of femininity and urbanity, are sought for predominantly by the younger generation of men. Other research indicates that traditional male jobs based on informal training in rural areas are disappearing and, as a result, not only the basis for the construction of masculine identity is shifting but also the future opportunities and plans of rural young people (Brandth and Haugen, 2000; Kenway, Kraack and Hickey-Moody, 2006).

In this paper then, we focus on the performance of masculinity by young rural men. While much research has focused on the relationship between rural masculinities and changes on the labour market (Brandth and Haugen, 2000; 2005), and some on the performance of masculinities by younger rural men (Bye, 2009), not much attention has been paid to young men who are not yet active on the labour market but who nevertheless have to live up to the changing standards of how to become a man in order to find a job or a partner (cf. Little and Panelli, 2007). In this paper, we focus on a group of such young men in rural Estonia and explore which resources they use to make sense of themselves, what do they consider the

[3] Or 'multiple masculinities' as Berg and Longhurst (2003: 352) call it.

male ways of doing things and through which practices do they perform masculinity. Before doing that, we will first briefly introduce the research location, participants and methods of data collection.

4.4. Järva-Jaani in the context of rural Estonia

The data informing this paper was collected during a participatory research project in the town of Järva-Jaani (Figure 1). Järva-Jaani is located in one of the most agricultural and least densely populated areas of Estonia (14,7 ppl/km2 compared to Estonian average 30,9 ppl/km2) (Regional Portrait of Estonia: Järvamaa, 2010). Employment in agriculture is the main source of income for local people followed by employment in the food processing and forestry sectors. In 2008, approximately 1000 people lived in Järva-Jaani town (Järva-Jaani municipality development plan, 2008).

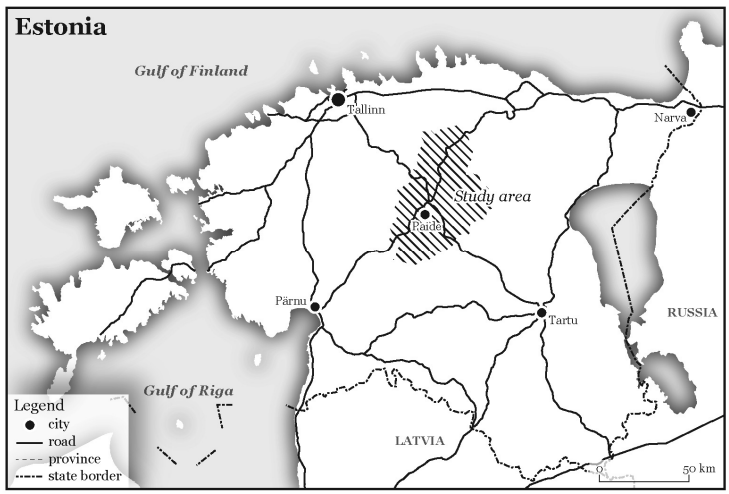

Figure 1. Location of Järva-Jaani

Similarly to other peripheral rural areas in Estonia, during the past decades, the population of Järva-Jaani municipality has been steadily decreasing (Statistics Estonia, 2012). In the past two decades (1989-2009), the decrease was greater than 30% (Järva-Jaani municipality development plan, 2008). The rural periphery in Estonia in general is characterized by decline – decline in employment opportunities, services, infrastructure as well as the population (Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007; Human Asset Report, 2010). The national migration trend in Estonia is out-migration from the rural periphery and small towns to regional urban centers, particularly into two biggest cities – Tallinn and Tartu and their hinterlands (Statistics Estonia, 2009; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010). Young (and ambitious) people are among the most active movers from rural areas to bigger towns and cities (Statistics Estonia, 2009). In 2007, for instance, nearly 40% of youth in Estonia changed

residence and it was the rural periphery of counties that lost the largest number of young people (Statistics Estonia, 2009; see also Jõeveer, 2003). Among the young people, women are more active movers from rural to urban areas than men (Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010; Statistics Estonia, 2012). As a result, a male-female imbalance among youth in rural areas exists and young rural men face a so-called 'bride problem' (Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010).

Population decline and economic hardships are visible in Järva-Jaani in the number of abandoned and deteriorating buildings. However, unlike many surrounding rural towns and villages where basic services have been closed, due to its central location, Järva-Jaani town is still able to provide many services.

4.5. Research approach and methods

Data collection for this paper was carried out in Järva-Jaani in the spring of 2009 and from September 2010 to April 2011. This paper is a part of a broader study which aim was to map the key places and practices of youth and investigate young people's sense of belonging and well-being in rural Estonia. We focused on young people in their last three years of high school. Potential participants were contacted via teachers, the activity councilor of Järva-Jaani high school as well as information posters. During the first meeting with the potential participants, the aims, activities and research methods of the project were introduced by the researcher. Informed consent was sought and information about confidentiality and use of the data given. Eight boys between 15-18 years old were involved in this project. The researcher and the participants met on average two times each week, mostly at Järva-Jaani high school but occasionally also at other locations, such as the town square, culture-house or the hamburger kiosk in Järva-Jaani town. Data collection occurred in the Estonian language (therefore all quotes from the research used in this paper are translated).

Our aim was to enable the respondents to participate in the project *as co-researchers.*[4] In order to achieve this, a participatory approach and a mix of visual and (inter)active research methods (video, photography, walks, mental mapping, peer-led and researcher-led interviews, peer-led questionnaire) were used.

Video in particular appeared as an appealing medium for the boys and making a film of the everyday life in Järva-Jaani, centered around the question 'is it good to live in the countryside?' and discussing it from the perspective of young people, became the main focus of the project. In addition, individual home-videos were made by the boys in order to practice filming as well as to provide an overview for the researcher of their everyday lives and meaningful places. The Järva-Jaani movie-material was gathered together with the whole group and the researcher during the participant-led walks. The movie-material was

[4] The work by Hart (1997) on young people's participation was used as a guideline in achieving meaningful participation (see also Heath et al. 2009).

watched discussed and edited together with smaller groups of two to three boys taking turns under the guidance of the researcher. The home-videos were discussed during the individual interviews.

By using a mix of multiple, qualitative methods we were able to give young people with different skills a chance to express themselves in ways other than words (Valentine, 2001), and motivate them to develop and practice new skills (Kellet et al., 2004). We discussed the contributions of using a mix of methods in youth research in more detail elsewhere (Trell and van Hoven, 2010). The data were coded with qualitative data analysis software (NVivo) and analyzed using a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

In youth research participatory approaches are suitable for exploring young people's own perspectives and experiences of their everyday lives (Heath et al., 2009; Trell and van Hoven, 2010). In addition, Hopkins and Pain (2007) suggest that participatory research approaches are well suited to relational knowledge creation and can provide an epistemological vehicle for getting beyond geographies which are mainly those of adults. In the case of our research, using a participatory approach implied that the respondents helped define the focus of the project, formulated questions and lead the process of data collection. For example, the topic of masculinities was not part of our initial research agenda. In interviews focusing on the everyday places and friends, in order to position themselves, however, the boys often emphasized their role and activities as young men. Male-female differences when doing schoolwork, partying or performing at a dance class are a few examples discussed during the interviews. The differences in male-female drinking habits and party-behavior appear on the participant generated video of young people at a party. The topic of masculinity emerged as relevant for the participants of our research for making sense of their places and themselves and as a result also became a part of our research.

4.6. Performing masculinities in rural Estonia

In order to explore the ways in which masculinities are performed in different spaces and how (the affordances of) those spaces shape gender identities, we focus on three locations that emerged from our data analysis as key shared places where the boys participating in our research[5] interact with friends and peers. First, boat trips on different rivers across Estonia; second, parties at home or friends' places; and third, dance classes at the House of Culture. The experiences and activities in these places were considered among highlights in the boys' current lives. We focus on these key shared spaces of the boys because it is through interaction with others, for young people mainly with friends and peers, that identities are negotiated and constructed.

[5] In the sections below, we will refer to our research participants as 'the boys'.

Table 1.

Places of interaction for the boys in our research

Examples	Setting	Participants: gender	Participants: age	Activities that places afford for the boys (from the data analysis)
1. Boat trips on different rivers	Nature, 'the outdoors' (river; forest)	Predominantly male	Youth only	Interaction with friends/peers; boating; making fire; building a camp; unexpected encounters with strangers
2. Parties at home/ friends' places	Indoors (living room; kitchen; bedroom)	Mixed	Youth only	Interaction with friends/peers; listening to music; dancing; drinking alcohol; playing games
3. Dancing at the House of Culture	Indoors (rehearsal hall)	Mixed	Youth and adults	Interaction with friends/peers/adults; learning a dance routine; creating own dance performances; dressing up & making outfits; performing; meeting youth from other towns/villages

As Table 1 illustrates, the three examples represent places with different characteristics and affordances in relation to the boys. Using places with different social and physical affordances as examples enables us to highlight the relational nature of masculinity. Our first two examples, boat trips and parties, are places which young people choose primarily for interaction with peers. In these places, adults are absent and therefore young people have relatively much autonomy as well as an opportunity to decide upon and regulate their own activities. The physical setting of our first example – nature and the outdoors – provides different opportunities for the performance of masculinity as compared with the indoor setting of the second and the third example. The other examples, parties and dancing, are both indoors but involve a different mix of participants from different sexes and age-groups as well as visibilities of the boys to different 'spectators', highlighting the role of the social setting.

Below, we will focus in more detail on the physical and social setting of each example, the activities and interaction which are afforded and the ways in which ideas about masculinities are actively constructed and performed in relation to the specific context. However, it should be noted that although different and at times contradicting masculinities are created in relation to each place, at least to some extent, these masculinities are understood as complementing each other in the context of one individual.

4.6.1. Boys on a boat

In the following example, the boys construct masculinity in relation to opportunities afforded by nature and the outdoors. The location and activities emphasize masculinity as rural in opposition to urban. In addition, masculinity is constructed in contrast to femininity in relation to physical abilities, toughness and in displaying solidarity and organizational skills.

The bi-annual boat trips on different rivers of Estonia emerged as one of the highlight-activities for the boys in our research. The boat trip tradition was started by the geography teacher of the local school in order to encourage youth to be more active outdoors and, at the same time, provide young people with the possibility to experience theories learned in the classroom in practice. After the first two years, the boat trip tradition was taken over by a group of older boys (16-18 years) as a fun activity to continue organizing together. A selected group of people, usually eight to ten boys, is invited to participate by senior boys (on a few occasions the girlfriends of the older boys were involved as well). Six of the eight boys in our research group have participated or organized the boat trips on one or more occasions. The trip, which takes place in spring and/or autumn during high water lasts for two to three days and consists of travelling along a river on a rubber boat, camping outside, making food on a fire and building shelter (see Figures 2 a & b).

Figures 2 a & b. Boys on a boat-trip (Source: respondents to the researcher, 2011)

The boat trips are strictly limited to the group that is involved and invited to join. It does not provide many opportunities for interaction with other people, except for some unexpected meetings with, for example, the military organizing their exercise in the forest, a few local farmers or nature observers. Being on the river implies the absence of adult surveillance to the boys and the freedom to make their own decisions and act accordingly. However, the absence of adults as authority figures does not mean that everybody can do as they wish. Instead, a hierarchy based on seniority and experience is established within the group. One of the organizers of the trip explains:

> 'The trip is a serious business actually. If I, for example, take my cousin Tiit with me and I have been on the trip for 4 times and it's his first and if I then say, 'go to the forest to get some firewood', he goes to the forest and does not start arguing with me. You have to know your place' (Urmo, male, 18).

The appropriate behavior for the boys on the boat trips was closely connected to the resources, opportunities and restrictions imposed by the physical environment. The unknown natural environment appeared to be an important 'actor' in the boat trip

experience. It provided the possibility for unexpected, even dangerous moments to occur. Such moments, which the boys labeled 'adrenaline moments' or moments of 'humor', gave them the possibility to demonstrate their abilities of being in charge, to show their toughness and courage and by doing so, to distinguish themselves as men (cf. Woodward, 2000). In the research by Woodward (2000) on military masculinities, the physical characteristics of the rural landscape i.e. ruggedness and harshness, are central elements for the military for 'making' the so called warrior-hero solider. The rough rural landscape is 'the setting for the provision of circumstances in which emotions - excitement, fear, and a sense of challenge - can be stimulated and then overcome by acquiring the necessary mental attributes' (Woodward 2000: 650). Urmo (male, 18), describes one of the adrenaline moments on the river:

> 'There was this incident once with a bridge. The current was so strong it pulled the first boat under but the bridge appeared to be too low, so the boat could fit under but the people on the boat could not. On the first boat there was a boy and a girl and they tried to hold on to the bridge and the boat, to prevent the boat from drifting under. But the current was too strong. And then, there they were, hanging on to the bridge, in the icy water. And then I came around the curve with my boat, I was the closest, and oh I was proud. My partner in the boat had not even seized the situation when I was already in the water, ready to pull my own boat ashore. The girl in the water was yelling, I jumped in and dragged the girl out of the water. The boy was able to climb out by himself. The girl wanted to go home at once, it was obvious she was in shock so we called their parents to find us and pick them up.'

Urmo (male, 18) prided himself of being in control of the situation and reacting to the challenge in a fast and courageous manner showing his ability to defy an extreme condition (the icy water). Some authors have associated ideas of control over the environment with hegemonic masculinity in general and rural masculinity in particular (Little 2002; Saugeres, 2002). As the quote above indicates, in a similar vein, in the context of the boat trips, being in control, alert, and not afraid to endure uncomfortable and tough situations was considered an appropriate behavior for a man. The natural landscape enabled the boys of our research to demonstrate such qualities. In addition, despite their absence from most of the boat trips, the quote above indicates that girls play a key role in the construction of men as brave adventurers. Whithead (2002: 119) indeed argues that the women are crucial for enabling men to exercise their 'heroic male project'.

In the context of the boat trips in general, the boys made a distinction between feminine and masculine based on the ability to put up with the 'rough' conditions (cf. Woodward 2000). Explaining the reasons for the girls not to be involved in the boat trips Urmo (male, 18) says:

> 'Well, boys are able to take things better, how do I put it, they don't give a damn, they don't care if the fire is low and the food sucks and… the ground is also hard you see but it is less important for us. For girls, you have to make everything comfortable.'

In addition, the ability and willingness to follow the rules of the group and act on orders was something that formed one of the bases for making a difference between the boys and the girls. In relation to the group-dynamics during boat trips, masculinity was constructed in contrast to femininity as the ability to show skill and solidarity in, for example, building up a camp and contributing to making food and fire. During the trips where girls had participated in, the boys felt that girls did not demonstrate appropriate initiative and willingness to contribute to the group effort nor did girls appreciate the division of roles, rights and duties.

At boat trips, an important characteristic distinguishing the real men were the practical skills in, for example, making a fire, building a shelter, or navigation. In relation to possessing such skills, the boys identified themselves as rural men and distinguished themselves from the cityboys:

> 'Cityboys don't have as much experience for sure. With physical labour for example… outdoors stuff, so many things you can't do in the city. Here [in the countryside] you have to be handy yourself, in the city you ask a maintenance guy to come and it's done. In the countryside you learn much more. And those city youth are also, I think… like more fragile, they can't cope on their own, everything is done for them' (Kristjan, male, 17).

To sum up, in the context of the boat trips, masculinity is constructed in relation to the natural environment and the opportunities it affords for the boys for action and interaction. The natural environment enables the boys to show certain practical skills as well as the ability and willingness to endure rough conditions. Those characteristics set them apart as real men in contrast to the girls and the city-boys. In the context of the boat trip, in the absence of adult surveillance, young people are relatively free to act in their own desired ways. Nevertheless, inter-group relations and hierarchy is established and appropriate practices for men determined within the peer-group.

4.6.2. Boys at parties

Our second example is of boys in what they call 'free space'. The absence of adults and adult surveillance at home or at friends' places was referred to by the boys as 'free space' (cf. Anderson, 2010: 132-152). Whereas at the boat trips adult absence seemed to be taken for granted, adult absence from parental home was considered out of the ordinary. The term 'free space', was used to emphasize the temporary absence of adult surveillance in a place, which in general was considered adult territory, thus not affording young people many opportunities for social interaction (Clark and Uzzell, 2002). The possibilities for social intearction created by the availability of 'free space' seemed to some extent to

counterbalance the lack of affordances available for youth for social interaction in rural space and relieve the 'rural dull' (Rye, 2006). The boys used 'free space' to hang out with friends, to sometimes just 'do nothing' but mostly, to party (see also Haartsen and Strijker, 2010). At the parties in 'free space', masculinity was constructed in relation to the opportunities afforded by the absence of adults and in relation to drinking alcohol and 'making fun' (cf. Trell et al., 2012a). In addition, at parties, sexuality played an important role in performing masculinity. The activities at parties emphasized masculinity in relation to social skills and in contrast to femininity as more relaxed, outgoing and not afraid to lose control.

At parties in this 'free space', larger mixed gender groups gather. Depending on how long the adults stay away, having a party may imply spending the whole night. Having a party mostly involves:

> 'Lots of food… usually everybody is drinking [alcohol] [...] So then we talk, make fun, use pillows to glide down the stairs, make stamps all over each other's bodies and, I don't know… at this last party, we were dancing with our shirts off' (Kristjan, male, 17) (see Figure 3).

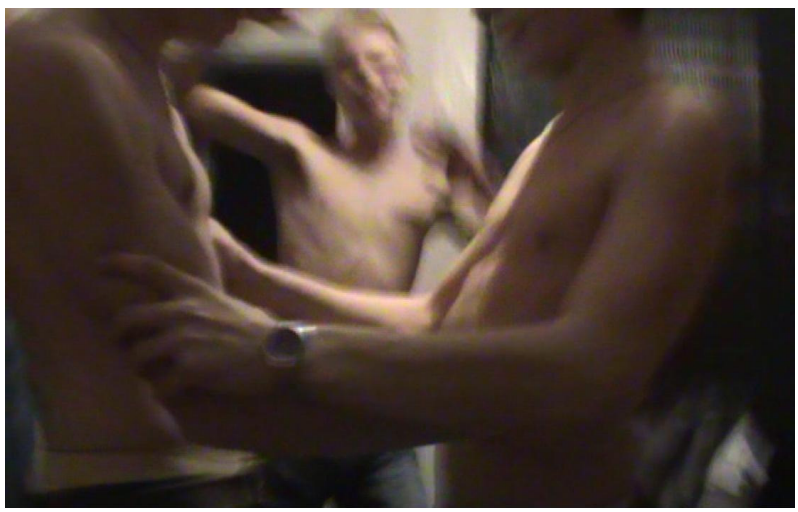

Figure 3. Boys 'making humor' at a party (Source: a still from a video shot by Raimo, male, 19)

The parties at home or friends' places represent a temporal discontinuity in (dominant and adult) social norms in those locations for young people (Winchester et al., 2003). At parties such discontinuity was expressed in the possibility to consume alcohol. In contrast to the boat-trips and the control and the skill that were demonstrated there, the appropriate behaviour at parties can be best characterized as chaotic and losing control. The chaos and losing control, often connected to the consumption of alcohol, appeared to create unusual and unexpected situations which the boys labelled 'making fun.' Being able to lose control

and 'make fun' without being concerned with the consequences was considered a masculine characteristic (cf. Canaan 1998; Trell et al., 2012a). This carefree attitude was considered characteristic of boys at both, boat trips and at parties. However, whereas at boat trips, the indifference was expressed as the ability to endure physical discomfort, in the context of the parties, the indifference is towards ridicule and appears in the ability to turn a situation into a joke. Making fun seemed to be an important coping strategy for the boys to manage difficult situations, for example peer pressure at parties as Urmo (male, 18) explains:

> 'In my opinion, men are more indifferent. It's like, whatever, I don't care, or actually, they do care but they can still make fun of it. It's like, whatever, let's just do it, it's cool and there's humor and we like humor. Even if things don't work out, at least we had some fun[…] Also, if you can't take alcohol that well and others force you to drink you can also survive by turning it into a joke.'

Our findings echo the research by Canaan (1998) in her study on young men and drinking in rural Britain. Canaan (1998) found that drinking and the associated loss of control was relevant for young men's construction of masculinity. When drinking and losing control, the young men reported to be more likely to take risks and perform 'outrageous acts' (Canaan 1998: 199). Therefore, drinking was linked to hardness and masculinity (Canaan, 1998). In such risky situations which occurred as a result of alcohol consumption, the young men could then demonstrate their strength, power and daring (Canaan, 1998; Trell et al., 2012a).

In many rural communities, the local drinking culture is in general considered to be a masculine culture (Campbell 2000). As Campbell and Phillips argue, drinking seems to form a part of the rough physical behavior of men that is widely accepted and tends to occupy a hegemonic position in rural areas (Campbell and Phillips, 1995). In a similar vein, women's decisions (not) to drink tend to reflect dominant attitudes towards alcohol, femininity and respectability, especially within a small community (Tolvanen and Jylhä, 2005). According to Valentine (2000), the fear of being socially excluded or marginalized limits the choices individuals are prepared to make. Our video data indeed reveals a contrast between the party-behavior of the boys and the girls. The boys can be observed taking vodka shots, chasing each other around the room, strutting and seeking attention in various ways. In the meantime, the girls sip cider or alco-pops and remain sitting relatively quietly on the couch. The behaviour of the girls does not reveal that they were drinking as much[6]. Previous research demonstrates that a culture of showing off is associated in particular with young men's drinking (Valentine et al., 2007; Canaan 1998). Women, in contrast, tend to move around less and are less visible, especially when drinking in public spaces (Valentine et al. 2007).

[6] It is likely that the presence of the camera might have had an additional influence on the behavior of the young people at that particular party, restraining some youth more and making others perform more actively. The young people present at the party were informed by the boys who were filming that the video will be shown to the researcher.

In the context of the parties, emphasizing one's (hetero) sexuality seemed to be an important way of performing appropriate masculinity. A successful male was considered to be somebody who is popular with women. Image 3 from our research below illustrates a situation at a party where, after having quite a few drinks, a big group of boys took off their shirts and started dancing around in front of the girls, and in front of the camera. Other video footage shows the boys chasing each other, trying to pull down each other's pants or hugging and touching each other in front of the camera. Previous studies on masculinity and sexuality have indeed demonstrated the central position of homophobia to contemporary definitions of adolescent masculinity (Kimmel, 2001). In his research on the 'fag' discourse among adolescent boys in the USA, for example, Pascoe (2005: 341) found that 'boys often jokingly danced together in order to embarrass each other by making someone else into a fag'. Ridiculing homosexuality, Pascoe (2005) argues, enabled the boys to distance themselves from it and emphasize their own heterosexuality.

In sum, in the context of the parties, the ability to lose control and 'make fun' were considered masculine characteristics. Similarly to the boat trips, real men were constructed in contrast to women as more relaxed and able to take it easy and have fun. The absence of adults enabled youth to engage in practices such as drinking alcohol which appeared to simplify social mixing. Furthermore, at parties, masculinity was constructed in relation to sexuality.

4.6.3. Boys and dancing

The final example is of dance trainings at the local House of Culture and dance performances all over Estonia. In this example, ideas about masculinity are related to the practices of the respected older generation and local traditions.

In 2010, 8% of the entire population of Järva-Jaani municipality was a member of a dancing group. Six of the eight boys in our research group were either actively participating in dancing or had previously been members of dancing groups[7]. Dancing is a local tradition, something that Järva-Jaani is known for at the national level and which the local people themselves consider the trade-mark of Järva-Jaani (interview Silva Kärner; see also Trell et al. 2012b). Young people are predominantly engaged in learning and performing modern (show) dance (see Figure 4). Dancing and performing together can be considered a practice that is connecting generations - the youngest dancers are 4, the oldest 70 years old. It is also something that is fostering interaction between genders as dance groups are a mix of male and female dancers. Oliver (male, 18) explains:

> 'Dancers have been active for a very long time here. Old dancers and new, and now everybody is dancing with everybody...It's become our tradition. And youth are also

[7] Not entirely the same group of boys that were involved with the boat trips.

interested in it, seeing that older people dance, so they want to do it also. In that way I see lots of good role models whom youth really respect.'

Figure 4. Boys performing at the national dancing competition 'School Dance' (Source: Egon Tintse)

The social context is significant in boys' decision to engage in dancing. In addition to the adult role-models, friendship groups and good company are reasons to continue dancing in the teenage years (see also Mõttus 2009). Like Madis (male, 18) explains: 'I have stayed in the dancing group because it's impossible to leave such a good company'. Several other boys reported the dancing groups to be like a family to them. Dancing seems to form an important part of growing up in Järva-Jaani. Kristjan (male, 17) explains:

> 'I've always been dancing, as soon as I began to walk. All the time, I've been dancing. I don't know if they had a mother-baby dancing group back then but basically I have been dancing as long as I can remember, maybe with the exception of one year.'

Dancing and its role in the boys' life illustrate that ideas about masculinity are constructed in relation to local traditions and culture. Dancing is not something that could in general be considered a typical or popular activity for neither rural nor urban men in Europe (Risner 2007). As Risner (2007: 140) argues, 'European cultural paradigm situates dance as primarily a 'female' art form (see also Hasbrook, 1993). For adolescent boys in particular dancing is often associated with homosexuality (Pascoe 2005). Considering the dominant notions of masculinity and 'pervasive homophobia', for teenage boys, being engaged in dancing can result in bullying, neglect and harassment (Risner 2007: 143; see also Kimmel, 2001). Therefore, in general, boys are not likely to engage in dancing or consider it an appropriate activity for real men (Risner 2007).

However, during the research project none of the boys or other young people at local school expressed in any way that it could be unusual for boys to dance. In the context of Järva-Jaani, boys dancing was seen as an ordinary activity. Research by Pascoe (2005) demonstrates that depending on one's identity and cultural background, dancing may indeed be considered masculine and appropriate. Exploring masculinity and sexuality of both, white and Afro-American boys in the USA, Pascoe (2005) notes that, whereas dancing appeared to carry distinctly homosexual associated meanings for white boys, for African-American boys who participated in hip-hop culture, in contrast, it carried masculine meanings. Similarly to the Afro-American boys in the study by Pascoe (2005), for the boys of Järva-Jaani, rather than marking them as different, dancing demonstrates their membership in local cultural community (Best, 2000). The long tradition of dancing in Järva-Jaani places the boy-dancers within a tradition of masculinity and because 'everybody is doing it' (Oliver, male, 18), the boys don't run a risk to be singled out and be harassed because of being dancers. Instead, dancing groups are considered the pride of Järva-Jaani by both the dancers and the local people. The accomplishments of the dancers are used to promote the local high school in the primary schools all over the municipality and some young men have transferred to the local school because of the dancing-opportunity.

Boys' engagement in and preference for dancing groups illustrates that there is flexibility in the construction of masculinity. In the case of the boys in this example, the possibility of success and recognition outweighed the importance of creating a masculine identity by participating in more traditional masculine hobby-activities such as football. While football trainings were also available in Järva-Jaani, they were not engaged in nearly as actively by the boys and did not have as high status as dancing. Indeed, recognition and accomplishments were relevant motivations for the boys to join and stay in the dancing groups, providing them an opportunity to counterbalance the negative representations of rural places. On the other hand, competitiveness and the drive for success can be considered a very traditional and hegemonic masculine characteristics, associated with aggression and dominance (Wellard, 2002).

In sum, in the context of dancing, what is masculine seems to be constructed in relation to adult role-models, friends and local traditions. Whereas in the context of parties the boys used dancing to ridicule homosexuality, in the context of the dancing groups, dancing is not considered something that is connected to sexuality. It's in place and appropriate for men within the local community and the house of culture. Through dancing some flexibility in terms of expanding the selection of activities appropriate for men was created although traditional masculine characteristics such as competitiveness and success were important for making that flexibility possible.

4.7. Reflections: masculinity and the future

By discussing the future plans and aspirations of the boys, in this section, we reflect on some of the ways they negotiate the rural context and introduce their own ideas on how to be a (rural) man.

In an earlier paper we argued that, although the rural context in Estonia is marginalized, young people in Järva-Jaani feel a strong sense of belonging and attachment towards their home town (Trell et al., 2012b). Although the boys in this study appeared to be aware of the negative representations of rural areas, they did not present themselves as being in a so-called 'rural loser' position (Tamm, 2010; Eesti Ekspress, 2010; Aavik, 2013). Instead, they often tried to frame their stories in a way that they would appear to be more capable and manly, when compared to the 'city-boys'. The capability was often associated with their technical and handy skills, as for example demonstrated during the boat trips. Another way for the boys to create a positive group-image, was to idealize the rural living-environment by emphasizing that, given a chance, they would prefer to live in their home-town and that rural living is more free, from the noise, the crowds but also stress and indifference.

> 'I wouldn't want to live in some city. I would like to be a student in the city the next years… and it can also change, I don't know.. but close to Järva-Jaani I think' Remo (male, 18) explains.
>
> 'Living in the countryside is actually a luxury, you know!'(Urmo (male, 18) adds.

Although the boys showed great attachment to their home town, at the same time, they did not see a future for themselves there because the work they aspired to do, the work that they through would enable them to be independent, successful and to create a family, was not available on the local labor market. All of the boys aimed to continue studying and considered education a key for their future. Interestingly, their choices for study included architecture, IT, nutrition technology, design and business, i.e. more service-oriented employment. As emphasized above, in a service-oriented economy, characteristics such as deference and docility are highly valued. The boys will thus need to rethink some aspects of their masculinities to adapt to the demands of a service-oriented sector (cf. McDowell, 2000; 2003).

In addition to continuing education and finding a job, a temporal move to urban areas was also desired for a more diverse selection of 'wife-candidates' (Karl, male, 16). In relation to their future family-life, the boys expressed some traditional ideas of themselves as being the breadwinners and heads of their families. Something that McDowell (2002: 115) termed 'domestic conformity,' a version of working-class respectability, was among the most desirable things for the boys in this research to achieve for the future.

> Researcher: 'What are the main things for you to achieve in the future?'

Remo (male, 18): 'Got to have a family. Wife, kids, car, house. Family and kids is the main thing, yes, family.'

Karl (male, 16): 'Good job, for sure, a job I would enjoy and what would pay a lot or, well, at least enough and then the next thing is the family, to start a family.'

In the period following the data collection in Järva-Jaani (2010-2012), four of the boys in our research (out of eight) continued their studies at the local high school, three graduated and either continued their education at universities and in vocational higher education in bigger cities (Tallinn and Tartu) or enrolled in compulsory military service. One moved to Tallinn to finish high school in an adult education/evening school after which he took a temporary job (in agriculture) abroad. The lives of our research participants reflect a more general trend among Järva-Jaani youth. Questionnaires[8] taken as a part of our study revealed that more than 80% (n = 38) of the respondents had strong positive feelings towards their hometown and towards living in the countryside in general. But even though most of the respondents expressed a desire to stay connected to their home places and community, only 13% (n = 6) of the respondents were planning to stay in Järva-Jaani after graduating from high school. The most important reason for leaving was the lack of opportunities to find work, but also to achieve something in, for example, sports or academic studies.

4.8. Conclusions

In this paper we explored key shared places and practices through which young men in rural Estonia perform and construct masculine identities. Whereas powerful images of rural places and rural masculinity exist and are reproduced in public discourse in Estonia, relatively little research has addressed how masculinities are constructed by the 'real' rural men living in the countryside. Therefore, in this paper, we focused on the construction and performance of masculinities in everyday lives and places of young men in rural Estonia. We considered masculine identity as something that emerges in situated practice and interaction and, in order to explore it, focused on three key shared spaces in our research participants' lives – boat trips on different rivers across Estonia; parties at home and friends' places; and dancing at the House of Culture. Within these locations, we identified different physical and social resources in relation to which masculinities are constructed and performed.

Our findings indicate that the countryside, just like urban areas, creates both opportunities and restrictions for the perfomance of different aspects of masculinities. The key shared spaces discussed above illustrate some specific opportunities and restrictions afforded by

[8] The peer-led questionnaire focused on everyday places and activities of youths in Järva-Jaani, their perceptions of life in the countryside and their future plans. The questionnaire was distributed to students between the ages of 14 and 18 attending the local high school (response rate 79.6%; n = 47).

the rural physical environment as well as the social context for the boys' negotiation of masculinities. They also illustrate the demands of boys for excitement, achievement and acknowledgement. Our respondents were actively using the local resources at their disposal to feel capable, accomplished, popular and in control. In that sense, the example-places and activities reflect some traditional dominant characteristics of masculinity, masculinity as representing power, competitiveness, adventure and strength.

Our findings illustrate that, similarly to rural places, rural gender identities are dynamic and constantly (re-) invented. Young rural men in our study actively performed different dimensions of masculinities *in relation* to available physical resources and social groups. The ability to perform some identities rather than others was influenced by the 'power-geometries' and societal regulations of different places (Valentine, 2007). Our data illustrate that, depending on the physical setting but also opportunities stemming from, for example, the presence or absence of adults, girls or alcohol, different practices and opportunities for different expressions of masculinities arise and are actively constructed by young men. In different contexts, different and at times contradicting aspects of masculinities were expressed. Although these different aspects of masculinities seemed to contradict each other to some extent, in the context of one individual, they were understood as complementing each other.

While our example-places and activities reflect some traditional dominant characteristics associated with rural masculinity, the boys' reflections and future plans illustrate that the basis on which fulfillment, success and accomplishments are measured upon may be changing to include elements that introduce features of femininity and urbanity. Even though, at the time of the research, the participants contrasted their identities as 'rural men' to 'urban men', the possible future occupations of the boys in this research seem to be quite strongly related to the urban environment and the service-sector. At the same time, the everyday socialization and performance of masculinity by the boys seemed to continue to emphasize some traditionally masculine ways of doing things. The future-plans of the boys are thus somewhat conflicting with their performance and narratives about their manhood at present and the young men may need to rethink some aspects of their masculinity in order to be successful and to retain their 'respect as men and as workers' (McDowell, 2000: 206)[9].

This paper furthermore stresses the positive resources available to youth for identity-work in the rural context, especially in view of their local daily realities. In the context of rural decline, and the scarcity of places of socializing, we identified some encouraging practices and activities that young men have taken initiative in organizing for themselves (the boat trips). At the same time, the findings highlight the relevance of the so-called 'adult

[9] However, McDowell (2000) also notes that, high youth unemployment and low-paid, casualized work as well as the growing uncertainty of late-modern society (see Giddens, 1993), may lead some young men to cling even more firmly to outmoded versions of hegemonic masculinity (see Frosch, 1995).

sponsored' activities (dancing classes). In light of the decline of the rural service-base and leisure time opportunities (Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010), we would like to emphasize the pride and positive emotions generated by participation in the activities of the dancing groups, which underline the importance of continuing to provide opportunities and places of self-realization in the rural context.

The research by Bye (2009: 287) highlights the importance of the idea of 'staying' in rural areas for young rural men, which 'is seen to be more important than expressing traditional rural masculinity'. In the context of Estonia, Trell et al. (2012b) also found that young people had strong positive attachments to their rural home-places. However, not many were intending to stay. Further research is needed to identify possible connections between the different characteristics of masculinity, rural 'loser' image, the decisions of the young people to stay or to return, and the impact that staying in rural areas can have on their well-being. In addition, although our research highlighted some flexible aspects in young people's performance of rural masculinities in Estonia, further research could examine to what extent rural young men continue to adopt alternative masculinities when staying in their rural communities after finishing school (cf. Bye, 2009).

Finally, our findings illustrate that it is fruitful to focus on the everyday level, as a more nuanced, and in the case of young people in rural Estonia, a more optimistic, picture of what it is like to be(come) a rural man may be revealed. In contrast to the larger scale studies where rural places are often considered homogenous spaces with relatively passive population (Kay et al. 2012), our focus on everyday level shows that rural realities are ambiguous and diverse and rural people are active agents in the construction of their identities. In line with the findings by Kay et al. (2012), our study underlines the necessity for more detailed research focusing on rural everyday lives and the ways in which local initiatives have the potential to generate 'multiple processes of transformation' (Kay et al. 2012: 55).

REFERENCES

Aavik, M., 2013. Arvamus. Marti Aavik: pruudipõud. Postimees. Available at: http://arvamus.postimees.ee/1091570/marti-aavik-pruudipoud. [Accessed: 15.02.2013].

Alas, J., 2007. Estonia addresses its redneck problem. The Baltic Times. Available at: http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17538/. [Accessed: 13.02.2013].

Anderson, J., 2010. Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces. Routledge, New York.

Berg, L.D., Longhurst, R., 2003. Placing masculinities and geography. Gender, Place and Culture 10, 351-360.

Blazek, M., Smith, F., 2009. Children's Place in Networks of Childcare in Slovakia: what Childhood and Gender tell us about Post -Socialism. Annals of West University of Timisoara Series GEOGRAPHY 19, 121-132.

Brandt, B., Haugen, M.S., 2000. From lumberjack to business manager: masculinity in the Norwegian forestry press. Journal of Rural Studies 16, 343-355.

Brandt, B., Haugen, M.S., 2005a. Doing rural masculinity e from logging to outfield tourism. Journal of Gender Studies 14, 13-22.

Butler, J., 1990. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. Routledge, London.

Bye, L.M., 2009. 'How to be a rural man': Young men's performances and negotiations of rural masculinities. Journal of Rural Studies 25, 278-288.

Campbell, H., Mayerfield, M., Finney, M., (Eds.), 2006. Country Boys: Masculinity and Rural Life. The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania.

Campbell, H., Phillips, E., 1995. Masculine Hegemony in Rural Leisure Sites in Australia and New Zealand. In: Share, P. (Ed.), Communications and Culture in Rural Areas. Center for Rural Social Research, Australia, pp. 107–126.

Campbell, H., 2000. The Glass Phallus: Pub(lic) Masculinity and Drinking in Rural New Zealand. Rural Sociology 65, 562-581.

Campenhout, G. van and Hoven, B. van (fourthcoming). 'It's where blokes can be blokes': Making Places in a New Zealand Rugby Club. Gender, Place and Culture.

Canaan, J., 1996. 'One thing leads to another': drinking, fighting and working-class masculinities. In: Mac an Ghaill, M. (Ed.), Understanding Masculinities. Open University Press, Buckingham, pp. 114-125.

Connell, R.W., 1987. Gender and Power. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Clark, C., Uzzell, D.L., 2002. The affordances of the home, neighbourhood, school and town centre for adolescents. Journal of Environmental Psychology 22, 95-108.

Cloke, P., 2005. Masculinity and Rurality. In: van Hoven and Hörschelmann (Eds.) Spaces of Masculinities. Routledge: New York, pp. 45-63.

Eesti Ekspress, 2010. Ääremaadel suur puudus pruutidest [online]. Available at: http://www.postimees.ee/287801/eesti-aaremaad-pruudiprobleem-vahenev-demokraatia-ja-soltuvus-toimetulekutoetusest/ [Accessed: 11.05.2012]

Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & Committee for Sustainable Development.

Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007. Estonian Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 [Eesti Maaelu Arengukava 2007-2013]. Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, Tallinn.

Gibson, J.J., 1979. The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception. Houghton Mifflin, Michigan.

Haartsen, T., Strijker, D., 2010. Rural youth culture: Keten in the Netherlands. Journal of Rural Studies 26, 163-172.

Hasbrook, C., 1993. Sociocultural aspects of physical activity. Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport 64, 106–115.

Hay, R., 1998. Sense of place in developmental context. Journal of Environmental Psychology 18, 5-29.

Heath, S., Brooks, R., Cleaver, E., 2009. Researching Young People's Lives. Sage, London.

Helve, H., (Ed.), 1999. A Comparative Study of Living Conditions and Participation of Rural Young People in Changing Europe. European Commission (RYPE) Report.

Hopkins, P.E., 2006. Youthful Muslim masculinities: gender and generational relations. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 31, 337-352.

Hopkins, P., Pain, R., 2007. Geographies of age: thinking relationally. Area 39, 287-294.

Hoven, B. van (2011) 'On voulait juste voir le genre d'homme que tu es': masculinités dans une prison du Nouveau-Mexique/ 'We were just testing what kind of man you are'- negotiating masculinities in a New Mexico prison. (*Justice Spatiale/ Spatial Justice* . Special issue: Gender, sexual identities and spatial justice*)*. Available at: http://www.jssj.org/media/dossier_focus_vo5.pdf [Accessed: 16.01.2013].

Hoven, B. van, and Hörschelmann, K. (Eds.) 2005. Spaces of Masculinities. Routledge: New York.

Jõeveer, J., 2003. Siserände vanuserisused [Internal migration by age]. In: Tammaru, T., Kulu, H. (Eds.), Ränne üleminekuaja Eestis [Migration in Estonia during the Transition Period]. Statistics Estonia, Tallinn.

Järva-Jaani municipality development plan for 2009-2015, 2008 [online]. Available at: http://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id¼13090293 [Accessed: 16.10.2010].

Kay, R., Shubin, S., Thelen, T., 2012. Rural realities in the post-socialist space. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 55-62.

Kellett, M., Forrest, R., Dent, N., Ward, S., 2004. Just teach us the skills please, we'll do the rest: empowering ten-year-olds as active researchers. Children & Society 18, 329-343.

Kenway, J., Kraack, A., Hickey Moodey, A., 2006. Masculinity beyond the Metropolis. New York, Palgrave McMillan.

Kimmel, M., 2001. Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity. In: Whitehead, S., Barrett, F. (Eds.) The Masculinities Reader. Polity, Cambridge, pp. 266-287.

Little, J., 2002. Rural geography: rural gender identity and the performance of masculinity and femininity in the countryside. Progress in Human Geography 26, 665–670.

Little, J., Panelli, R., 2007. Outback? Romance. A Reading of Nature and Heterosexuality in Rural Australia. Sociologia Ruralis 47, 173-188.

Lysaght, K., 2002. Dangerous friends and deadly foes - performances of masculinity in the divided city. Irish Geography 35, 51-62.

McDowell, L., 2000. The Trouble with Men? Young People, Gender Transformations and the Crisis of Masculinity. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 24 (1), 201-209.

McDowell, L.,2002. Masculine discourses and dissonances: strutting 'lads', protest masculinity, and domestic respectability. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 20, 97-119

McDowell, L., 2003. Redundant Masculinities Employment Change and White Working Class Youth. Wiley-Blackwell.

McDowell, L., 2004. Masculinity, identity and labour market change: some reflections on the implications of thinking relationally about difference and the politics of inclusion. Geografiska Annaler B, 86 (1), 45-56.

Mõttus, A., 2009. Ülle Vaas ja tema tantsukogukond. In: Journal for Teachers [Õpetajate Leht], 2009 [online]. Available at: http://www.opleht.ee/?archive_mode=article&articleid=1801&print=1. [Accessed: 1.11.2010].

Pattman, R., Frosh, S., Phoenix, A., 2005. Constructing and experiencing boyhoods in research in London. Gender and Education 17, 555-561.

Risner, D., 2007. Rehearsing masculinity: challenging the 'boy code' in dance education. Research in Dance Education 8, 139-153.

Rye, J.F., 2006. Rural youths' images of the rural. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 409-421.

Saugeres, L., 2002. Of tractors and men: masculinity, technology and power in a French farming community. Sociologia Ruralis 42, 143-159.

Shortall, S., 2002. Gendered agricultural and rural restructuring: a case study of Northern Ireland. Sociologia Ruralis 42, 160-175.

Statistics Estonia, 2009. Migration [Ränne]. Statistics Estonia, Tallinn.

Statistics Estonia, 2012 [online]. Available at: www.stat.ee [Accessed: 11.05.2012].

Stenbacka, S., 2011. Othering the rural: About the construction of rural masculinities and the unspoken urban hegemonic ideal in Swedish media. Journal of Rural Studies 27, 235-244.

Stenning, A., Hörschelmann, K., 2008. History, Geography and Difference in the Post-socialist World: Or, Do We Still Need Post-Socialism? Antipode 40, 312-335.

Tamm, M., 2010. Eesti ääremaad: pruudiprobleem, vähenev demokraatia ja sõltuvus toimetulekutoetusest. Postimees [online]. Available at: http://www.postimees.ee/287801/eesti-aaremaad-pruudiprobleem-vahenev-demokraatia-ja-soltuvus-toimetulekutoetusest/ [Accessed: 11.05.2012].

Thelen, T., 2011. Shortage, fuzzy property and other dead ends in the anthropological analysis of (post)socialism. Critique of Anthropology 31 (1), 43–61.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., 2010. Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people. Fennia 188, 91-104.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., 2012. Place attachment in rural areas: a participatory research project with youth in Cedar, British Columbia. In ten Toonder (Ed.) Re-exploring Canadian space / Redécouvrir l'espace canadien. Cahiers, Canada.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P., 2012a. 'In summer we go and drink at the lake' young men and the geographies of alcohol and drinking in rural Estonia. 3rd International conference on Children, Young People and Families. Singapore.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P., 2012b. 'It's good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can't stay here': Youth and belonging in rural Estonia. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 139-148.

Valentine, G., 2000. Exploring children's and young people's narratives of identity. Geoforum 31, 257-267.

Valentine, G., 2007. Theorizing and Researching Intersectionality: A Challenge for Feminist Geography. The Professional Geographer 59, 10-21.

Wellard, I., 2002. Men, sport, body performance and the maintenance of 'exclusive masculinity'. Leisure Studies 21(3-4), 235-247.

Whithead, S.M., 1998. Men and Masculinities: Key Themes and New Directions. Sage, Cambridge.

Winchester, H., Kong, L., Dunn, K., 2003. Landscapes: Ways of Imagining the World. Pearson Education, Harlow.

Woods, M., 2005. Rural Geography. Sage, London.

Woodward, R., 2000. Warrior Heroes and Little Green Men: Soldiers, Military Training, and the Construction of Rural Masculinities. Rural Sociology 65, 640-657.

Chapter 5

'IN SUMMER WE GO AND DRINK AT THE LAKE[1]': YOUNG MEN AND THE GEOGRAPHIES OF ALCOHOL AND DRINKING IN RURAL ESTONIA[2]

Abstract

In this paper we explore the role of place in drinking practices of young people in the context of rural Estonia. We draw on a participatory research project carried out during seven months with a group of eight young men (15-18 years of age). We focus on three locations identified as the most popular drinking places by the young men in our research - familial homes, a local hamburger kiosk and the outdoors. The findings indicate that youth drinking practices as well as the drunkenness-related risks are spatially contingent. Characteristics of individual drinking locations influence the negotiation of local and national opportunities, restrictions and attitudes towards drinking, and the associated risks. We argue that, when developing public health tools, it is fruitful to pay attention to the local context and specific places in which young people's drinking practices are negotiated.

Keywords: alcohol; drinking; drunkenness; young people; rural Estonia.

[1] Raimo, male, 18.

[2] Chapter based on: Trell, E-M., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P.P.P., 2012. 'In summer we go and drink at the lake': young men and the geographies of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness in rural Estonia. International Conference on Children, young people and families, July 2012, Singapore. Accepted, subject to revisions, by an international, peer-reviewed journal.

5.1. Introduction

In Estonia, there is a growing concern about rising levels of alcohol consumption and the associated risk behavior among young people (Pärna et al., 2012). The World Health Organization's (WHO) Health Behaviour in School-aged Children survey (Currie et al., 2008) indicates that in 2005-2006 Estonia had the highest share of young people (15 years old) who had been drunk before their 13th birthday (compared with 41 other countries in Europe, Northern-America and Western-Asia). Different national and international studies suggest that Estonian young people are drinking more than in the past decades, often in heavier drinking sessions, and are less likely to see alcohol as a hazard (Currie et al., 2008; Pärna et al., 2012;). Pärna et al. (2012: 201) conclude that '[a]lcohol consumption among adolescents in Estonia is a serious public health problem'. Understanding and regulating issues of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness are thus high on the social and political agenda of Estonia today (Ugland, 2011; Beekmann, 2012). By the end of 2012 Estonian first comprehensive alcohol strategy, a green paper on alcohol, is expected, with alcohol consumption of young people as the first of the three priority areas to address[3] (Rikken, 2011; Täht, 2011).

Whereas much statistical data is available on the amounts of alcohol that young people in Estonia consume, little is known about how, with whom and where they drink. Recent research on geographies of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness (Jayne et al., 2011; 2012; Holloway et al., 2009) indicates that when developing public health tools and alcohol policy, it is fruitful to view drinking practices and alcohol-related harms within their local (geographical) contexts. Focusing on alcohol consumption, Jayne et al. (2012) argue that whereas official government norms and guidelines exist to regulate drinking, in practice alcohol consumption is predominantly guided by complex local norms, expectations, identities and embodied experiences. Valentine et al. (2008: 39) indicate that young people in rural UK, for example, are often introduced to drinking by their parents, even though such actions may 'run counter to medical/government guidelines' (cf. Haartsen and Strijker, 2010). Tolerating underage drinking may be one of the responses by rural adults to the specific limitations of rural living (Valentine et al., 2008). Drawing on research from around the world, Jayne et al. (2011: 1) argue that space and place are 'key constituents of practices and processes relating to alcohol, drinking and drunkenness'. Therefore, Jayne et al. (2011) conclude that geographers have an important contribution to make to academic, policy, political and popular debates on alcohol.

In this article then, we examine the ways in which local opportunities and restrictions are expressed in and negotiated through key drinking locations of young men (15-18 years of age) in rural Estonia and the ways in which different aspects of individual drinking locations shape drinking practices. We focus on young rural men because drinking practices of men in

[3] The other two priority areas are: reducing harmful drinking and reducing overall consumption (Täht, 2011)

Estonia in general and men in rural Estonia in particular are considered particularly problematic, making this group very vulnerable for alcohol-related harm (Tekkel and Veideman, 2011). We explore three places, home, hamburger kiosk and the outdoors, which emerged from the data as the key drinking places of the young men. Below, we will first outline the relationship between context, place and alcohol and the role of age and gender in drinking practices. Next, we will introduce our research approach. We will then discuss drinking in the context of our research town and within key drinking locations of young men.

5.2. The place of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness

It has long been acknowledged that societies differ in drinking practices and in the cultural position of alcohol and drinking (Bales, 1946; Bacon et al. 1965; Wilson, 2005). 'Drinking cultures are aspects of other cultures, part and parcel of wider webs of significance, broader fields of affiliation, identification and action,' Wilson (2005: 12) argues. Previous research indicates that different political, economic and socio-cultural contexts provide different opportunities and restrictions in terms of drinking and have resulted in different drinking cultures, patterns and risks (Pavis et al, 1997; Wilson, 2005). In the Chinese context, for example, drinking is used as an integral component in the proper administration of a ceremony or ritual, such as the wedding, and consumed in moderation (Smart, 2005). In the UK, Valentine et al. (2010) found that getting drunk and loosening inhibitions is the key motivation for the younger generation to consume alcohol. Estonian drinking culture is characterized, among other things, by a preference for strong alcoholic drinks, prevalence of irregular heavy drinking episodes and acceptance of drunkenness in public (Popova et al., 2007; Prättälä et al., 2011).

Drinking practices and cultures are, however, rarely uniform across a country or a region. On a more local level, characteristics of specific locations, such as community size, population density, socio-economic conditions, or the level of urbanization, i.e. the specific social and physical environment, determine the availability of drinking places and influence drinking practices and related consequences (Valentine et al., 2007; Jayne et al., 2012). National drinking policies are, for example, often negotiated on a local level through individual drinking practices and locations. Garvey (2005) indicates that in the public sphere in Norway alcohol is heavily patrolled and the Norwegian state takes an active role in regulating alcohol consumption through heavy taxation and local and national sales restrictions, among other measures. However, the participants in Garvey's (2005) study circumvent government intervention by using the private space of home for what is called *'vorspiel'*, i.e. drinking and getting drunk (in a more affordable manner) before going out to the city center pubs. In New Zealand, Campbell (2000) identifies different patterns of consumption, conversation and behavior which men are expected to follow in local pubs in his rural research town. Campbell (2000) finds that drinking served to establish and maintain a certain hierarchy and power-structure among the men of the village. Parker and Auerhahn (1998: 301) argue that

local drinking context is also of 'paramount importance in determining the outcome' of intoxication. In particular, significant differences are noted between public and private drinking places (Garvey, 2005; Holloway et al., 2008) with public drinking establishments in particular being high-risk locations for alcohol-related aggression (Pernanen, 1991; Leonard et al., 2002).

These examples illustrate that local drinking context influences drinking practices and that individual drinking places can vary considerably in terms of appropriate behavior, norms and controls and consequentially also harms associated with drinking (Wells et al., 2005). The ways that people use places, the places they prefer and which are accessible to them, however, also depend on various social identity markers. In terms of accessibility and use of drinking places, age and gender are among the most influential identity markers (Wilsnack et al., 2005; Valentine et al., 2007; 2010).

5.3. Young people, place and alcohol

Drinking alcohol is essentially a social act (Douglas, 1987). In Norway, for example, nine out of ten bottles of beer are drunk in the company of others (Garvey, 2005). For young people in particular, the majority of drinking takes place in relation to social facilitation and is engaged in together with friends or peers (Pavis et al., 1997). The research of Pavis et al. (1997) indicates that the main motivations for young people to drink are connected to the social group –enhancing their social experience, having fun with friends and just being part of a particular social group. Young people thus seek places where they can meet and drink together with a group of friends and peers.

Consuming alcohol is illegal for minors (under 18 years of age). In most European countries alcohol-sale to individuals under 18 years of age is restricted as is access to clubs and pubs selling alcohol. The illegal status of alcohol for young people means that when they drink, they are likely to do it in places which are secluded and out of sight of any forms of external control (adults, police). Valentine et al. (2010: 920) found that youths usually consume alcohol in the so-called 'marginal public spaces' such as streets, bus shelters, outside youth centers and parks, places where adult rules can be more easily transgressed. As indicated above, where people drink has an influence on drinking practices and consequences. In terms of high-risk locations for youth, Forsyth and Barnard (2000) found that drinking locations with the least potential for adult supervision, such as outdoor hidden locations (e.g. street or park) and licensed venues, were significantly associated with self-reported drunkenness whereas locations with a greater likelihood of parental supervision, such as the home and relatives' homes, were associated with self-reported soberness.

While legal restrictions on alcohol and drinking are gender-blind, the literature suggests that drinking practices and the related risks in youth drinking places are gender-differentiated (Leyshon, 2008; Waitt et al., 2011). Men, as the literature suggests, drink more than women

and more frequently consume large amounts of alcohol at a time (Wilsnack et al., 2000; Anderson et al., 2012). Research conducted by the Estonian National Institute of Health Development in 2010, for example, reveals that 43% of men (16-64 years old) engaged in heavy episodic drinking compared to 12% of women (Anderson et al., 2012). When drunk, men in general tend to engage in risky behavior (vandalism, violence, traffic offences) more easily than women (Pavis et al., 1997; Pärna et al., 2012). Comparing alcohol related risk-behavior for boys and girls in Europe, the ESPAD survey indicates that having been involved in a physical fight was reported, on average, by 17% of the boys but 6% of the girls (Hibell et al., 2012: 82). Other alcohol-related behaviors that are more common among boys include trouble with the police, unprotected sex, and accident or injury (Hibell et al., 2012). The careless drinking-behavior of men is also reflected in national statistics of Estonia – more than 25% of deaths in the case of Estonian men are attributable to alcohol (compared to 11% in the case of women) (Anderson et al., 2012). Because of their problematic drinking practices and risky behavior when drunk, men are considered a particularly vulnerable group to alcohol-related harm in Estonia (Tekkel and Veideman, 2011).

In sum, the circumstances and places in which people consume alcohol as well as drinking practices and risk-behavior are age- and gender-specific. The combined effects of the circumstances in which young people drink alcohol and the risk-taking that is characteristic to male drinking indicate that young men's drinking places need particular attention.

5.4. Methods and participants

Data collection for this paper was carried out in the spring of 2009 and from September 2010 to April 2011. The aim of the study was to map key places and practices of youth and investigate young people's sense of belonging and well-being in rural Estonia. We focused on young people in their last three years of high school. Potential participants were contacted via teachers, the activity councilor at the local high school as well as information posters. During the first meeting with the potential participants, the aims, activities and research methods of the project were introduced by the researcher. Informed consent was sought and information about confidentiality and use of the data given. Eight boys[4] between 15-18 years old were involved in this project. Details about all participants are presented in this paper in a way that protects their identity. The researcher and the participants met on average two times each week, mostly at the local high school but occasionally also at other locations, such as the town square, culture-house or the hamburger kiosk. Data collection occurred in the Estonian language (therefore all quotes from the research used in this paper are translated).

Our aim was to enable the respondents to participate in the project as co-researchers. In order to achieve this, a participatory approach and a mix of visual and (inter)active research

[4] In the sections below, we will refer to our research participants collectively as 'the boys'.

methods (video, photography, walks, mental mapping, peer-led and researcher-led interviews) were used. We discussed the contributions of using a mix of methods in youth research in more detail elsewhere (Trell and van Hoven, 2010). The data were coded with qualitative data analysis software (NVivo) and analyzed using a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

In youth research, a participatory approach is considered suitable for exploring young people's own perspectives and experiences of their everyday lives (Heath et al., 2009; Trell and van Hoven, 2010). In the case of our research, for example, the topic of alcohol was not a part of our initial research agenda. However, when working with the boys, on several occasions they came to meet the researcher to go filming or interviewing after a big weekend party and the discussions evolved around the highlight experiences of a previous party. The effects of a night out were visible on the boys as well, who had red eyes and shaky hands. In addition, before leaving for a filming-walk, the boys desperately needed to visit the local shop to buy bottles of water, energy drink and juice to cure their hang-over. When filming their relevant places and activities on their own, the boys took the cameras to their parties and provided detailed accounts of their drinking rituals and practices. Similarly, during the research-meetings and (peer-led) interviews, the topics of alcohol, drinking and partying frequently came up. Alcohol and drinking appeared to be a significant part in the boys' lives and as a result these topics also became a part of our research.

While the inclusion of young people as co-researchers may contribute to a fuller understanding of their perspectives on the issue under investigation, Robson et al. (2009) argue that this can raise significant ethical issues. In the case of our study, in relation to alcohol and drinking, the use of participant-led video in particular generated additional ethical concerns. The participants provided very specific and intimate details of themselves and their friends' drinking behavior. The participants seemed content and proud to present researchers with home-videos of partying and drinking heavily (comments such as 'are we gonna be famous in Holland'? or 'let's put this up on Youtube' were made). Although we respected young people's autonomy in making decisions with regards to the project, revealing this kind of data would compromise their and their friends' privacy and possibly have negative implications for them in the future and therefore the details of the video-data are not revealed.

5.5. Alcohol, drinking and drunkenness in the context of our research town

Our research was conducted in a small town (approximately 1000 inhabitants) located in one of the most agricultural and least densely populated areas of Estonia (Figure 1). Below we will refer to our study area as 'the town'. The name of the town is not revealed in this article to help protect the identity of the participants.

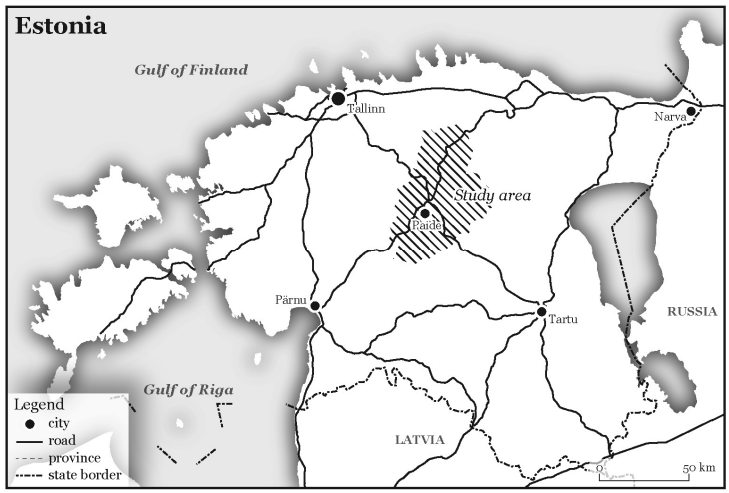

Figure 1. The location of our research

In a way similar to other peripheral rural areas in Estonia, our research area can be characterized by out-migration, decline of the service-base as well as declining employment opportunities. Population decline and economic hardships are visible in the town in the number of abandoned and deteriorating buildings. Many basic services, such as a post office or a bank, have been closed in recent years. Bye (2009: 278-279) argues that many rural communities in the Western world have experienced 'stagnation, migration and 'brain drain'' in recent decades (cf. Woods 2005). Rye (2006) termed the outcome of rural restructuring and the lack of opportunities to socialize for the young people the 'rural dull'. The youth in our study labeled the lack of activities in the town and the dullness experienced as 'countryside depression' (Raimo, male, 18). 'It's all the same, all the time' Ivo (male, 18) described. The young people indicated the need to have more (diverse) places and activities for spending free time and developing new skills and boredom was used as a reason for drinking alcohol (cf. Goodwin and Armstrong-Esther, 2004). The following discussion occurred between our research participants during a peer-led interview:

> Fassu (female, 18) 'Is alcohol a common element of rural life?'
>
> Urmo (male, 18) 'It's not very common but it is...'
>
> Raimo (male, 18) '... one of the most popular activities.'
>
> Urmo (male, 18) 'Yes, you can come out of this so-called 'countryside depression' and you can have fun. You don't have to get drunk, you just take one beer, play pool, come home, watch CSI and then go to sleep, it's like...normal.'

> Raimo (male, 18) 'There's nothing to do at night so you start drinking and then life is fun and you have all kinds of thoughts and...'

Compared to the small number of services and places to spend free time in, the number of establishments selling (strong) alcohol in the town was relatively high. At the time of conducting this research there were 8 establishments selling strong alcohol in the town (see Figure 2). This number reflects the high density of alcohol outlets in Estonia in general – whereas the number of retail shops selling strong alcohol per 100 000 inhabitants is 6 in Finland and 4 in Sweden, in Estonia it is 197[5] (Estonian Institute of Economic Research, 2011: 89; Lai and Habricht, 2011). Alcohol is thus very accessible to the local people.

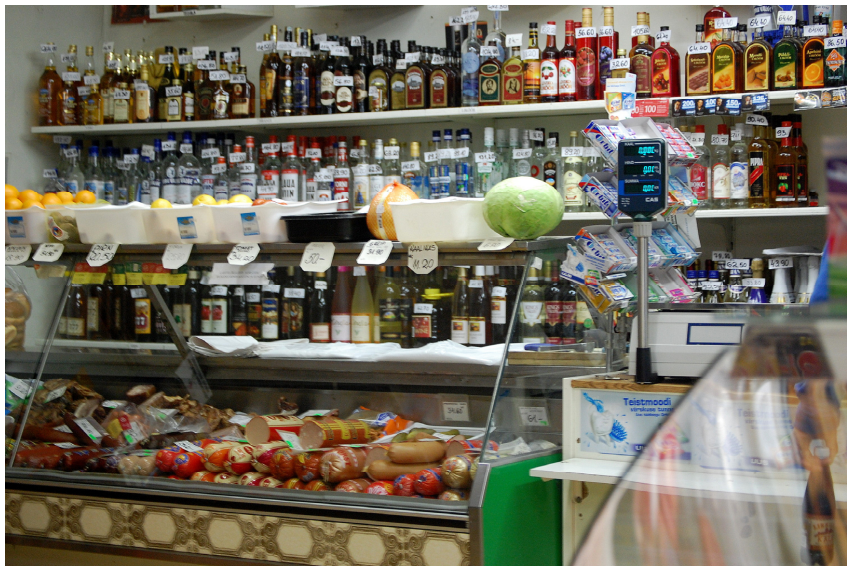

Figure 2. Strong alcohol in a local grocery-store

Our data indicate that in the town alcohol was not only very accessible to adults but also to young people despite, or because of, the small community size. One of the boys described the town from the point of view of young people:

> 'You could say it's like a cage. […] Everybody knows everybody and sees everybody and there's no privacy' (Ivo, male, 18).

Although the visibility and the limited anonymity might suggest that obtaining alcohol is difficult for young people, our data indicate the opposite. Gaining access to alcohol did not pose a problem for the boys in our research. To the contrary, the small community-size enabled them to know the 'right people' and places:

[5] In Estonia, strong alcohol is also available in supermarkets and grocery stores (figure two). Finland and Sweden operate with state-owned retail monopolies on the sale of alcoholic beverages and strong alcohol is only available in selected retail locations (Örnberg and Ólafsdóttir, 2008).

Researcher: 'So it must be difficult to buy alcohol or cigarettes here, if everybody knows everybody?'

Tõnis (male, 16): 'Actually not really, because most of the clerks at shop A sell also to minors. And there are many drunks who are willing to buy us something… that's pretty easy and they make a small profit.'

Drinking and drunkenness was relatively visible in the town. The boys admitted that adults drunk in public places or at daytime was not an unusual sight for them. The video data illustrate the boys interacting with two elderly men who are drinking (a mix of vodka and beer) and visibly drunk, in front of the main entrance to the biggest grocery-store in town. The men appear to have difficulties understanding the boys while the boys have fun trying to wake up the third man who appears to be passed out behind a big garbage can. Although the local drunks provided an easy access for young people to alcohol, it was also specifically in relation to seeing the drunkenness in their everyday lives that made the boys reflect on possible dangers of alcohol. The boys did not report having any health concerns connected to drinking, however, they were aware of the negative consequences of drinking in relation to losing social status and not being able to get and keep a job (although they were unable and reluctant to base their drinking decisions on possible future consequences). The boys referred to the local drunks as 'the ones who have been unfortunate in life' (Oliver, male, 18) and, looking into their own future, argued that drinking heavily and losing control is a phase which they will need to grow out of.

Rural drinking cultures are often considered masculine cultures (Campbell, 2000). In the town, it was indeed predominantly men who could be observed drinking in either outdoors or public drinking places. According to the boys, drinking often resulted in a physical fight or an aggressive act. The boys indicated that, in addition to the local quarrels, young men from nearby towns and villages would crash local parties looking for fights every once in a while. Aggression seemed an inseparable part of drinking in the town (cf. Alas, 2007). Parker and Auerhahn (1998) indicate that intoxication tends to influence aggression. (Young) rural men in particular tend to engage more easily in risky situations when alcohol is consumed (Canaan, 1998). Canaan (1998) found that in rural Britain, drinking and the associated loss of control are relevant aspects in young men's construction of masculinity (cf. Trell et al., fourthcoming). Campbell and Phillips (1995) similarly associate the alcohol-related aggression in rural areas with the masculine (drinking) cultures where drinking forms a part of the rough physical behavior of men that is widely accepted and tends to occupy a hegemonic position (cf. Leyshon, 2008).

The above supports the literature stating that the local rural context is influential for how people drink (drinking practices and risks), which drinking places are available and accessible and for whom as well as how alcohol and drinking are perceived. However, drinking practices, opportunities, restrictions and risks are further expressed and negotiated in and

shaped by characteristics of individual drinking locations. Below we will therefore focus in more detail on the key drinking places for the boys.

5.6. Key drinking-places for the boys

Within their everyday context the boys identified three key places of drinking alcohol: familial homes; the local hamburger kiosk; and the outdoors (lake; old railway dam). Table 1 gives an overview of some key characteristics of these places. In the following sections, we will explore drinking and drunkenness in the context of these key places in more detail.

Table 1.

Characteristics of the key drinking-places

Place	Characteristics
Home	Private space; only invited guests and their friends Participants: mixed-gender groups; youth only Adults (parents) are usually not present when alcohol is consumed
Hamburger kiosk	Public place; outskirts of the town, next to an industrial area and a motorway Participants: bigger groups of mainly local youth (mixed gender); some local adults (mainly male); passer-byes Adults are present when alcohol is consumed Monitored occasionally by police
Outdoors	Places: lake; old railway dam Public and semi-private places; on the margins of the town Participants: youth only; mixed gender; local and other youths Adults are not present when alcohol is consumed

5.6.1. Drinking at home

The home is a place where young people are 'subject to controls by parents over the use of space and time' (Sibley, 1995: 129). Parents commonly determine the proper use of space and time at home and make rules which young people have to manage, negotiate and may often contest (Hopkins, 2010). Referring to the times that the parents were away, the boys in our research labeled home 'free space'. Because 'free space' indicated a temporal discontinuity in (dominant and adult) social norms at home, it was on such occasions that the majority of youth parties were held. Figure three is a screenshot from a 'home-video' made by the boys during one of the 'free space' parties at their friend's home. The video illustrates the party as it progresses from the moment the guests arrive, through drinking the first shots and cocktails, sitting in a circle, eating and talking; to the culmination of the party with the boys dancing around the room with their shirts off, pulling down each other's pants; to eventually running out of alcohol, discussions on how to arrange more drinks and

finally passing out on the beds and couches. In contrast to the routine, control and predictability often associated with the home (Garvey, 2005), the video represents home during the party as a place of unexpected events and disarray.

Figure 3. Drinking at home: boys taking vodka-shots

The video provides an insight into the drinking-practices of both, the boys and the girls. The boys can be observed taking vodka shots, strutting and seeking attention in various ways. In the meantime, the girls sip cider or alco-pops and remain sitting relatively quietly on the couch. The behaviour of the girls does not reveal that they were drinking as much[6]. One of the boys explained their party-behaviour:

> 'In my opinion, men are more indifferent. It's like, whatever, I don't care, or actually, they do care but they can still make fun of it' (Urmo, male, 18).

Previous research demonstrates that a culture of showing off is associated in particular with young men's drinking (Valentine et al., 2007; Canaan 1998). Women, in contrast, tend to move around less and are less visible, especially when drinking in public spaces (Valentine et al. 2007). Valentine et al. (2007) associate such differences with the dominant social norms which regard female drunken behaviour as less respectable than the same behaviour by men. Although such differences are mostly encountered in public drinking environments where the drinker is more visible to others, our findings indicate that similar rules and restrictions may apply when drinking in the more private space of home.

[6] It is likely that the presence of the camera might have had an additional influence on the behavior of the young people at that particular party, restraining some youth more and making others perform more actively. The young people present at the party were informed by the boys who were filming that the video will be shown to the researcher.

A key factor shaping drinking-practices at home is the private character of the place. Home is often regarded as a safe place where one has a large degree of control over what happens (Holloway et al., 2008). The private character of home implies that only invited guests are present and it is easier to exclude outsiders from entering and participating in what is going on (cf. Haartsen and Strijker, 2010). In their research about youth (drinking-) places in the Dutch countryside, Haartsen and Strijker (2010) found that rural parents prefer their children to hang out and party close to home. For that purpose, making a 'keet', a self-built or self-fitted shed or caravan, often located within farmyards, was encouraged (Haartsen and Strijker, 2010). Due to the proximity of a 'keet' to the parental home and the private nature of such a place, the parents felt a stronger sense of control on their offspring's activities (Haartsen and Strijker, 2010). In addition, partying at home might be safer and more comfortable than partying in, for example, a pub or a park, as it avoids young people travelling on relatively dangerous countryside roads. In a similar vein, drinking at home was considered more controlled and hence safer by the boys as well as their parents in our research town. Tõnis (male, 16) talked about drinking at home while his parents were present:

> 'My mom understands. She'd rather I drink at home than that I go somewhere outdoors. Rather at home and under control.'

The above quote indicates that although home was considered a place of adult rules by the boys, in relation to teenage-drinking, those rules may be becoming more flexible (cf. Valentine et al., 2007). In line with the findings of Valentine et al. (2007), our data indicate that in rural Estonia, home is increasingly the place where young people learn to drink, often with parental knowledge. Our data furthermore indicate that drinking at home when parents were present was associated with specific activities or occasions, such as birthday-parties or going to the sauna. Similarly to Finland, one of the most common drinking occasions in Estonia is during/after sauna (Tolvonen, 1998). It is common for private houses and newer apartments in Estonia to have a sauna and people regularly use the sauna, usually during weekends. Drinking beer or cider during/after sauna is often not considered 'real' drinking (Tolvanen, 1998). In a similar vein, beer and cider themselves were often not considered 'real' alcohol by the boys. Whereas vodka and strong liquors were off-limits in the presence of their parents, it was not uncommon for the boys to consume beer, cider or long drink.

Whereas drinking at home may be safer in terms of the external risks associated with alcohol consumption, our findings suggest that due to the privacy of home, the presence of only a selected group of friends and the perceived safety, young people considered home to be a suitable environment for experimenting with drinking or testing one's limits. Such testing often resulted in drinking to the excess. Home was the place associated with incidents of losing all inhibitions, drinking oneself unconscious and instances when professional medical help was needed after a party. Raul (male, 15) talked about one of such occasions:

> ‘Two friends got really drunk at [name] grandmom’s place. Luckily the grandmom returned in time to call an ambulance for one of them and he pretty much survived thanks to having his stomach pumped.’

In sum, home thus appeared as an appealing drinking location for the boys because of the privacy and perceived safety (and affordability of alcohol). However, the drawback of partying and drinking at home for young people is the lack of possibilities to expand one’s social space by meeting and interacting with people outside the closest circle of friends. Public, commercial or semi-private places provide more opportunities for unexpected and new encounters. In our research town, the hamburger kiosk was used by young people as such a meeting and party-place.

5.6.2. Drinking at the hamburger kiosk

The hamburger kiosk is located on the edge of the town, next to an industrial area and a motorway. It is a combination of a fast food café and a grocery store. Locally, the hamburger place is known as a youth meeting-place where alcohol is accessible and it is checked occasionally by police. Both, male and female youths visit the hamburger kiosk. However, a number of female respondents in our study expressed a sense of discomfort with regard to meeting at the hamburger kiosk, in particular in the evening hours, because of the reputation of the hamburger kiosk as a drinking place, often associated with trouble. The importance of the hamburger kiosk is especially pronounced during the colder months (in Estonia’s case roughly from October to May). In summer, young people prefer meeting in the outdoors.

The hamburger kiosk appeared as an appealing drinking-location for the boys for two main reasons, its accessibility and the attitude of the adults who were present. Whereas parties at home had to be carefully planned and timed in relation to when the parents were away, at the hamburger kiosk it was possible to meet spontaneously and drinking alcohol seemed to be possible regardless of who was present. The boys indicated that the hamburger kiosk was one of the few places where they could do nothing and ‘just relax and interact freely’ (Andres, male, 16). Both, the possibility to just do nothing and hang out at the hamburger kiosk as well as the possibility to consume alcohol were related to the practices and the relaxed and permissive attitude of the adults who visited that place. The hamburger kiosk was namely not a place specifically designated for young people. It was also actively used by some local adults for whom it functioned as a pub where they can unwind and have a couple of beers after a working-day. The adults visiting the hamburger place were described by a local teacher during an interview as the kind of ‘folks’ who like alcohol a bit more than average. Rivo (male, 18) commented:

> ‘Sometimes I would go to the hamburger kiosk around 17.00 and there they [older men] were, sitting behind their big cans of beer.’

The boys valued the adults not interfering in the activities of young people at the hamburger kiosk, however, during parties, when drinking more than regular, clashes between youth and adults at the hamburger kiosk sometimes occurred. Kristjan (male, 16) describes an instance where he was threatened and attacked by a local older man at a party there:

> 'I was kind of drunk and that man, it was a classmate of my mom, and he started being arrogant with me and I got annoyed and said something bad about their family. He said that he'll pick me up with his car the next day, take me to the forest, throw away my phone and if we can't talk things straight he would beat me up. But it's basically not possible to talk to him anyway, when we went outside of [name of place] that evening he just hit me in the face and told me he would make my life a living hell.'

Although the presence of and supervision by adults is often considered to reduce the risks that young people can be exposed to when drinking (Parker and Auerhahn, 1998), the above quote indicates that adults do not necessarily provide supervision but may, on contrary, pose additional risks. Because of their tough-guy vision of masculinity and necessity to demonstrate their power and daring, the conflicts might be particularly likely to occur in places where rural men drink together (cf. Canaan, 1998).

5.6.3. Drinking in the outdoors

In both, rural and urban contexts, young people often hang out in places that are unused by adults, especially at times when they are able to congregate together, in summer, after school and during the evening. Rurality in particular affords young people many isolated or secluded spaces where they can carve out informal drinking opportunities without being noticed by the police or disturbing local residents (Valentine et al., 2007). The boys in our research indeed indicated that their third key drinking-place was 'the outdoors', which referred to the old railway dam and the lake, located on the margins of the town. In these places, local as well as other youth, both male and female, met mostly in summer to hang out and to drink alcohol.

The minimal adult surveillance and intervention made 'the outdoors' appealing to young people for partying. One of our research participants explained the preferences of his friendship-group:

> 'In summer we go and drink at the lake, police seldom goes there' (Raimo, male, 18).

Although some authors (Anderson, 2010; Hopkins, 2010) highlight the positive effects for youth of having their own autonomous spaces to socialize and explore identities, in combination with alcohol and being removed from any forms of external control, can have negative effects on youth well-being (Forsyth and Barnard, 2000).

The boys' stories of the 'highlight' experiences of drinking in the outdoors often evolved around conflict-situations and fights in which several young people were seriously injured. Karl (male, 18) describes one of such events:

> 'We were celebrating a birthday at [location in the outdoors]. He [a local friend] started chatting to some girl from town B and a guy from town B got angry and called his friends up and those friends came by five cars, with baseball bats and metal rods and started beating everybody up. It was a tough case. One guy had his leg in a cast, head-injuries and hundred other worries.'

In determining the outcome of a potentially violent situation, the context in which drinking and aggressive behavior takes place is of paramount importance (Parker and Auerhahn, 1998). Whereas Parker and Auerhahn (1998) focus on the impact of the social environment as a contributor to the outcome of violent behavior, our results point to the additional role of the place of drinking in determining the risks. One of the boys described the location where the above incident happened:

> 'We were partying at a secluded place, there was no way for anybody to help us' (Raimo, male, 18).

Wells et al. (2005) argue that in settings away from home where 'excessive drinking is more normative, where fewer proscriptive norms regarding socially appropriate behavior are present or where social guardians are less likely to be present', alcohol-related problems are more likely to occur. According to prosecutor Merike Lugna (Eesti Ekspress, 2009) who has held trials over several alcohol-aggression related cases, during summer months when more outdoor parties are held in Estonia, indeed, alcohol-related conflicts also tend to increase, especially when groups of young people gather to drink. Our data indicate that among the drinking places of rural youth, 'bush parties' in remote outdoor locations which are accessible for everybody, yet out of sight of adults, pose particularly high-risks for the well-being of young men (cf. Stoduto et al., 1998).

5.7. Conclusions

In this paper we explored drinking places and practices of young men in rural Estonia. Whereas alcohol, drinking and drunkenness are of growing public health concern in Estonia, especially in the case of young, men and in the context of rural Estonia, not much is known about local drinking places and practices which may facilitate excess drinking in rural Estonia. However, place, context and identity have a significant influence on issues related to alcohol, drinking and drunkenness (Jayne et al., 2011). In particular in the light of the first comprehensive alcohol green paper for Estonia being developed, we find it fruitful to explore in more detail the local norms, expectations, identities and embodied experiences which guide alcohol consumption.

Our data indicate that drinking behavior and the associated risks are relational and spatially contingent. The drinking context appears to be of paramount importance. Many rural communities in the Western world have experienced 'stagnation, migration and 'brain drain'' in recent decades (Bye, 2009: 278-279; Woods, 2005). In the everyday lives of our research participants the 'rural dull' (Rye, 2006) was manifested in the lack of places to socialize. The lack of free-time places and the dullness was connected to generating entertainment by drinking. Alcohol seemed thus to be used as a practical short-term solution to some of the structural pressures connected to rural life. One possible measure to decrease consumption of alcohol by youth in rural areas might thus be the creation of additional places for leisure.

Our findings indicate that both, the conditions of rural living as well as characteristics of individual drinking locations result in specific drinking practices and risks for young people. Different risks appear, for example, in relation to drinking in either public or private places. Our data indicate that in private places, such as the home, young people are more likely to experiment with alcohol and drink to the excess. In contrast to people drinking, being loud and violent in city centers or public space, people drinking at home are not visible or intruding in other people's space and activities, thus not breaking any social or legal rules (Holloway et al., 2008). Those drinking to harmful or hazardous levels at home therefore often remain insulated from concern (Valentine et al., 2007). In addition, rural drinking at home sometimes takes place with parental consent. Drinking practices at home and the implicit tolerance of underage drinking by adults in rural communities should thus be addressed when developing public health tools (cf. Valentine et al., 2007).

Due to its private character, home is a relatively risk-free place in terms of visibility to and possible conflicts with 'others'. In public places, young people are more visible and have more contact with 'others' who influence their drinking behavior and can pose risks. Our data indicate that in remote outdoor place, when inhibitions and self-control are lowered as a result of drinking alcohol and with no external forms of control present, violent conflicts with dangerous consequences are likely to occur. When drunk, young rural men in particular tend to perform more and engage in risky behavior in order to demonstrate their masculinity. In the context of Estonia, rural men specifically are portrayed as at risk of destroying themselves with alcohol abuse and violence (Alas, 2007). In that sense, drinking in outdoor locations could be particularly harmful for young rural men. Furthermore, our data illustrate that drinking practices are shaped in relation to other people present. The attitudes of the young men in our study were formed in relation to their friends, parents and other local adults who often functioned as role-models or gatekeepers to their access to alcohol but could also pose additional risks.

In line with the findings of Jayne et al. (2011) our data illustrate that official government guidelines or health campaigns on harmful alcohol consumption do not inform a 'decision situation' of young people. Rather, as Jayne et al. (2011) argue, drinking practices are shaped

by cultural and inter-group norms, peer expectations and environmental stimuli. When asked whether he has ever considered that alcohol can be dangerous Olav (male, 16), for example, gave the following answer: 'Yes, I am thinking about it at the moment and I can say that it's dangerous and all now but in reality, you know, friends come over in the evening with some beers and…'. Based on their everyday experiences, the boys rather tended to ridicule the national anti-alcohol campaigns. Urmo (male, 18), for example, argues, 'This campaign 'Drink Reasonably' is so pointless in my opinion. Once you take the first sip, all reason goes out of the window'.

Finally, our findings point to the important role of the drinking context, places and company in forming and influencing drinking behaviors and risks. We thus argue that in order to develop better public health tools, it is fruitful to locate drinking in its local economic and socio-environmental contexts as well as to 'recognize these contexts as well as drinking places as independent risks in their own right' (Pavis and Cunningham-Burley, 1999: 594). It was not in the scope of this research to compare drinking places and practices of rural male and female or to explore in more detail rural domestic drinking practices and the ways in which attitudes towards drinking and drunkenness are transmitted from one generation to the other at one of the most popular drinking-places, the home. In order (for the policy-makers) to understand and respond to the local circumstances and target particular social groups better, further research is thus needed.

REFERENCES

Alas, J., 2007. Estonia addresses its redneck problem. Available at: http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17538/ [Accessed: 29.09.2012].

Anderson, J., 2010. Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces. Routledge, New York.

Anderson, P., Møller, L. and Galea, G., 2012. Alcohol in the European Union Consumption, harm and policy approaches. WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark. Available at: http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf [Accessed: 9.10.2012].

Bacon, M. K., Barry, H. and Child, I. L., 1965. A Cross-cultural Study of Drinking. Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol. Supplement no. 3, 29-48.

Bales, R.F., 1946. Cultural differences in rates of alcoholism Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol. 6, 480-99.

Beekmann, L. 2012. Estonia is developing an alcohol policy green paper. Available at: http://www.eurocare.org/newsroom/newsletter/issue_6_2012/in_focus/estonia_is_developing_an_alcohol_policy_green_paper [Accessed: 9.10.2012].

Bye, L. M., 2009. 'How to be a rural man': Young men's performances and negotiations of rural masculinities. Journal of Rural Studies, 25 (3), 278-288.

Campbell, H., 2000. The Glass Phallus: Pub(lic) Masculinity and Drinking in Rural New Zealand. Rural Sociology 65, 562-581.

Campbell, H. and Phillips, E., 1995. Masculine Hegemony in Rural Leisure Sites in Australia and New Zealand. In: Share, P. (Ed.), Communications and Culture in Rural Areas. Center for Rural Social Research, Australia, 107–126.

Currie, C., Gabhainn, S.N., Godeau, E., Roberts, C., Smith, R., Currie, D., Piket, W., Richter, M., Morgan, A. and Barnekow, V., (Eds.), 2008. Inequalities in young people's health: international report from the HBSC 2006/06 survey, (Health Policy for Children and Adolescents, No.5). WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen. Available at: http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/53852/E91416.pdf [Accessed: 15.09.2012].

Douglas, M., 1987. 'A Distinctive Anthropological Perspective', in Douglas, M. (ed.), *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives from Anthropology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eesti Ekspress, 2009. Loomad on lahti. Accessed on: 09.10.2012. Available at: http://www.ekspress.ee/news/paevauudised/eestiuudised/loomad-on-lahti.d?id=27678633

Estonian Institute of Economic Research, 2011. Alcohol Market, Consumption and Harms in Estonia: Yearbook 2011. Available at:

http://www.ki.ee/publikatsioonid/valmis/Alkoholi_aastaraamat_2011.pdf [Accessed: 30.09.2012].

Forsyth, A. and Barnard, M., 2000. Preferred drinking locations of Scottish adolescents. Health Place, 6(2), 105-15.

Garvey, P., 2005. Drunk and (Dis)Orderly. Norwegian Drinking Parties in the Home. In Wilson, T. M. (ed.) Drinking Cultures. Berg, Oxford.

Goodwin, M. and Armstrong-Esther, D., 2004. Children, social capital and health: increasing the well-being of young people in rural Wales. Children's Geographies, 2(1), 49-63.

Haartsen, T. and Strijker, D., 2010. Rural youth culture: Keten in the Netherlands. Journal of Rural Studies, 26, 163-172.

Heath, S., Brooks, R., Cleaver, E., 2009. Researching Young People's Lives. Sage, London.

Hibell, B., Guttormsson, U., Ahlström, S., Balakireva, O., Bjarnason, T., Kokkevi, A. and Kraus, L., 2012. The 2011 ESPAD Report. Available at: http://www.espad.org/Uploads/ESPAD_reports/2011/The_2011_ESPAD_Report_FULL_2012_06-08.pdf. [Accessed: 26.09.2012].

Holloway, S.L., Jayne, M., Valentine, G., 2008. 'Sainsbury's is my local': English alcohol policy, domestic drinking practices and the meaning of home. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 33, 532-547.

Holloway, S.L., Valentine, G. and Jayne, M., 2009. Masculinities, femininities and the geographies of public and private drinking landscapes. Geoforum 40, 821-831.

Hopkins, 2010. Young people, place and identity. NY: Routledge, 320 p.

Jayne, M., Valentine, G. and Holloway, S.L., 2008. The place of drink: Geographical contributions to alcohol studies. Drugs: Education, Prevention & Policy 15, 219-232.

Jayne, M., Valentine, G. and Holloway, S.L., 2011. Alcohol, Drinking, Drunkenness. (Dis)Orderly Spaces. Ashgate, Surrey.

Jayne, M., Valentine, G. and Holloway, S.L., 2012. What Use Are Units? Critical Geographies of Alcohol Policy. Antipode 44, 828-846.

Lai, T. and Habicht, J., 2011. Decline in Alcohol Consumption in Estonia: Combined Effects of Strengthened Alcohol Policy and Economic Downturn Alcohol and Alcoholism 46, 200-203.

Leonard, K.E., Quigley, B.M. and Collins, R.L., 2002. Physical aggression in the lives of young adults: Prevalence, location, and severity among college and community samples. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 17, 533– 550.

Leyshon, M., 2008. We're stuck in the corner'; young women, embodiment and drinking in the countryside. Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy, 15 (3), 267–289.

Örnberg, J.C. and Ólafsdóttir, H., 2008. How to sell alcohol? Nordic alcohol monopolies in a changing epoch. Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs 25, pp. 129-153. Available at: http://nat.stakes.fi/NR/rdonlyres/07BAA6E2-35D4-45F3-918C-82CA824DF4A0/0/Cisnero.. [Accessed: 15.09.2012].

Parker, R.N. and Auerhahn, K., 1998. Alcohol, Drugs, and Violence. Annual Review of Sociology 24, 291-311.

Pärna, K., Tael, M., Ringmets, I. and Aasvee, K., 2012. Alcohol Consumption Among Adolescents in Estonia 1994-2010. In Maddock, J. (ed.) Public Health - Social and Behavioral Health, InTech, 570 p.

Pavis, S., Cunningham-Burley, S. and Amos, A., 1997. Alcohol consumption and young people: exploring meaning and social context. Health Education Research 12, 311-322.

Pavis, S. and Cunningham-Burley, S., 1999. Male youth street culture: understanding the context of health-related behaviours. Health Education Research, 14 (5), 583-596.

Pernanen, K., 1991. Alcohol in human violence. NY: Guilford Press, 280 p.

Popova, S., Rehm, J., Patra, J. and Zatonski, W., 2007. Comparing Alcohol Consumption in Central and Eastern Europe to Other European Countries. Alcohol & Alcoholism, 42 (5), 465–473.

Prättälä, R., Helakorpi, S., Sipilä, N., Sippola, R. and Sääksjärvi, K. (Eds.), 2011. Social Determinants of Health Behaviours: Finbalt Health Monitor 1998–2008. Available at: http://www.thl.fi/en_US/web/en/research/projects/finbalt/publications [Accessed: 10.10.2012].

Rikken, K., 2011. Alcohol Policy Revolution to Get 'Green Book'. Available on: http://news.err.ee/politics/fcdad46b-dcfc-4c71-902b-2324dc0f1495

Robson, E., Porter, G., Hampshire, K., and Bourdillon, M., 2009. 'Doing it right?': Working with young researchers in Malawi to investigate children, transport and mobility. Children's Geographies, 7, 467-480.

Rye, J.F., 2006. Rural youths' images of the rural. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 409-421.

Sibley, D., 1995. Geographies of Exclusion. London: Routledge, 224 p.

Smart, J., 2005. Cognac, Beer, Red Wine or Soft Drinks? Hong Kong Identity and Wedding Banquets. In Wilson, T. M. (ed.) Drinking Cultures. Berg, Oxford.

Strauss, A.L. and Corbin, J., M., 1998. Basics of Qualitative Research. London: Sage, 336 p.

Tekkel, M. and Veideman, T., 2011. Health Behavior among Estonian Adult Population. 2010. Tallinn: National Institute for Health Development.

Tolvonen, E., 1998. I and others: alcohol use among older people as a social and cultural phenomenon. Ageing and Society, 18 (05), pp 563 583

Trell, E. and van Hoven, B., 2010. Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people. Fennia 188, 91-104.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B. and Huigen, P., 2012. 'It's good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can't stay here': Youth and belonging in rural Estonia. J. Rural Stud. 28, 139-148.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B. and Huigen, P.P.P., fourthcoming. Youth negotiation and performance of masculine identities in rural Estonia.

Täht, T., 2011. Translating international policy documents into action in Estonia. Available online: http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/docs/ev_20111117_co04_en.pdf [Accessed: 11.10.2012]

Ugland, T. 2011. Alcohol on the European Union's Political Agenda. Available at: http://www.sirus.no/filestore/Import_vedlegg/Vedlegg_publikasjon/sirusrap.1.112.pdf [Accessed: 15.09.2012].

Valentine, G., Holloway, S.L. and Jayne, M., 2010. Generational patterns of alcohol consumption: Continuity and change. Health and Place 16, 916-925.

Valentine, G., Holloway, S.L., Jayne, M. and Knell, C., 2007. Drinking Places: Where People Drink and Why? York: Joseph Rouwntree Foundation.

Valentine, G., Holloway, S., Knell, C. and Jayne, M., 2008. Drinking places: Young people and cultures of alcohol consumption in rural environments. Journal of Rural Studies, 24, 28-40.

Waitt, G., Jessop, L. and Gorman-Murray, A., 2011. 'The guys in there just expect to be laid': embodied and gendered socio-spatial practices of a 'night out' in Wollongong, Australia. Gender, Place & Culture 18, 255-275.

Wells, S., Graham, K., Speechley, M. and Koval, J.J., 2005. Drinking patterns, drinking contexts and alcohol-related aggression among late adolescent and young adult drinkers. Addiction 100, 933-944.

Wilsnack, R. W., Vogeltanz, S. C, Wilsnack, S. C. and Harris, T. R., 2000. Gender differences in alcohol consumption and adverse drinking consequences: cross-cultural patterns, Addiction, 95(2), 251-265.

Wilson, T.M. (Ed.), 2005. Drinking Cultures. Berg, Oxford, 304 p.

Woods, M., 2005. Rural Geography. Sage, London, 352 p.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I discuss the main findings from this research. I start with a short recap of the research aim and focus in section 6.1 followed by an overview and discussion of the main insights from preceding chapters in section 6.2. After that, in section 6.3. I discuss some main themes that are interwoven throughout this research. In section 6.4. I reflect on the research ethics and approach. The chapter concludes with directions for future research in section 6.5.

6.1. Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to provide insight into the everyday 'rural realities' in Estonia as experienced and practiced by young people living in the countryside. I examine young people's lives and the rural Estonian context from a cultural geographical perspective, focusing on the relationships between people and places. In this thesis, the voices and places of young people take center stage. Within the context of rural decline and marginalization, I am interested in how young people actively negotiate the rural context in Estonia. In particular, I focus on young people's negotiation of and practices in their everyday context at the local level.

6.2. Summary of the main findings

Each of the preceding four chapters discusses one specific theme related to people-place relationships: making sense of place (Chapter 2), belonging (Chapter 3), identity (Chapter 4) and well-being (Chapters 3 and 5). Collectively, the themes represent the 'rural realities' as experienced by the young people in my research and provide indications of how rural young people position themselves and negotiate the rural.

In Chapter 2 I discuss the ways in which walks, mental mapping, video, photography and interviews enable (or restrict) young people to communicate different aspects of their places and enable researchers to involve young people more actively in whole research process. I furthermore explore the added value (as well as limitations) of walks, mental mapping, video and photography (the 'new' research methods) for revealing different aspects of place, when compared to only interviewing. Drawing on Cele (2006) I consider places to be a collection of concrete and abstract aspects. Concrete aspects of places include the appearance of a place, the physical characteristics and objects present, but also the ways in which individuals use places and objects. Abstract aspects refer to the inner processes place evokes in individuals. They refer to dreams and imaginations people attach to places,

memories connected to places, how places make people feel (cf. Cele 2006). Given my engagement with everyday place experiences, I explicitly focus on and emphasize the suitability of different methods for exploring these multiple aspects and meanings of daily places for different individuals.

The findings indicate that the 'new' research methods have additional advantages for exploring people-place relations. . The interviews revealed mostly abstract aspects of places in an indirect way. In interviews, places were communicated by means of representations of experiences and emotions, of social and cultural aspects, of opinions and memories. The 'new' more creative and (inter)active methods were able to include objects, events and the respondent's senses in generating knowledge about place (cf. Cele, 2006). Places became part of knowledge production triggering responses, stories and emotions. Especially methods that can be used 'in the field' enabled research participants to directly experience and communicate place by using their senses (olfactory, tactile, auditory, visual).

Exploring in more detail the aspects which make places meaningful for young people can contribute to the understanding of the affective ties between young people and their places (cf. Trell and van Hoven, 2012). The affective ties between people and places which hold a potential to support and strengthen a person's psychological well-being and health (cf. Altman and Low, 1992; Bonnes and Bonaito 2003). Such bonds between people and places can furthermore motivate individuals to be involved in local life, foster care about the society in general and people's immediate environment in particular and can eventually lead people to commit personal resources to a place (Pretty et al. 2003). Evans (2007) maintains that such commitment is what makes communities strong and healthy. By revealing the multiplicity of ways in which people relate to their places, the 'new' research methods thus have the potential to contribute to understanding better some important topics that are at the core of geographical research.

In the context of the participatory approach chosen in my research project, combining the 'new' creative and interactive methods proved to be successful for involving youth as individuals and as a group. The creative and interactive components of the 'new' methods provided individuals, with different skills and abilities, ways to express themselves, and thus motivated them to stay involved with the project. While working with different methods, the participants also learned new skills (i.e. how to carry out an interview or edit a movie) and gathered knowledge that was useful to them when reflecting on their daily lives (i.e. using information, concepts and terminology of the project in their everyday communication) during the project. The qualities of creative and interactive methods also gave the respondents a possibility to work outside the group context and without the presence of the researcher. Video and photography, in particular, enabled young people to work on their own pace without anybody intruding on their schedules, to represent things they chose, from whichever angle they chose. The mix of different methods was thus successful in terms of empowering youths.

My findings suggest that, in addition to revealing diverse aspects of everyday places and practices, the 'new' research methods can motivate and enable different individuals to participate and share their experiences. Furthermore, combining the 'new' methods or combining them with interviews has an added value for revealing different aspects of place that are meaningful for individuals and can contribute to their sense of belonging to a place (cf. Altman and Low, 1992; Trell and van Hoven, 2012). In sum, the mix of methods is able to paint a detailed picture of daily places, colored by the way different individuals see, hear, smell, use or experience them.

In the broader context of post-socialist transition and rural decline, in Chapter 3, I examine the key places of belonging of young people in rural Estonia. My aim was to identify practices and experiences through which rural young people develop a sense of belonging to their local places and explore the influence of belonging on their well-being. My further aim was to explore links between the everyday context and broader changes influencing young rural lives in Estonia.

The chapter gives an overview of Estonia in transition, focusing in particular on rural places. It discusses processes that structurally influence rural life and places in Estonia and can position rural inhabitants at a marginalized position. It then focuses on the importance of the everyday local places for providing a basis for belonging. My argument in Chapter 3 is that, although large-scale processes of transition have placed many rural Estonian youths in a vulnerable position (cf. Saarniit, 1999), their local everyday context also provides young people with opportunities for belonging, inclusion and for responding to the uncertain times.

The findings indicate that, in contrast to the mostly negative portrait that the statistics paint of rural Estonia, a focus on the everyday level reveals significant places and practices which can provide encouraging and supportive bases for young people to negotiate and respond to structural changes. Places of belonging, experiences and skills learned there, as well as informal social ties formed, appear to provide rural young people with a basis to form their own identities, connect to the older generation, form friendships with peers and deal with uncertainties. The local community continues to fulfil an important support function and is influential for young people both, for migration to the city, and for staying connected, feeling grounded in and possibly returning to their rural homes. My findings then also draw attention to the benefits of exploring everyday context in order to reveal a more nuanced picture of continuities and discontinuities associated with post-socialist transition.

In Chapter 4 I focus on key places and practices through which young men in rural Estonia perform and construct masculine identities. I argue that, whereas powerful images of rural places and rural masculinity exist and are reproduced in public discourse in Estonia, not much is known about how masculinities are constructed by 'real' rural men living in the countryside. Stenning and Hörschelmann (2008) insist that by focusing only on the global or the national scale, researchers are reducing difference (age; social class; gender) to

somewhat generalized patterns of, for example, labor market participation or domestic roles. In order to be sensitive towards difference in identity construction, Hopkins and Pain (2007) call researchers to pay more attention to the different relations and the intersections of various markers of identity.

In Chapter 4, then, I explore key local social and physical resources for identity construction available for young men in their (rural) environments. Drawing on Gibson's (1979) theory of affordances I explore relations between identity performance and space. In so doing, I follow Butler (1990) by considering masculine identity as a performance that emerges in situated practice and interaction rather than being an ascribed and static notion of social difference.

The findings show that, similarly to rural places, rural gender identities are dynamic and in a constant flux. The young rural men in my study actively performed different masculinities in relation to available physical resources and social groups. The ability to perform some identities rather than others was influenced by the 'power-geometries' and societal regulations of different places (Valentine, 2007). In contrast to the larger scale studies where rural places are often considered homogenous spaces with relatively passive population (Kay et al. 2012), my focus on everyday level shows that rural realities are ambiguous and diverse and rural people are active agents in the construction of their identities. I conclude that the young men in my study are in the process of creating a flexible and reflexive understanding of how to be a rural man.

In Chapter 5 I explore the role of place in drinking practices of young people in the context of rural Estonia. In Estonia, there is a growing concern about rising levels of alcohol consumption and the associated risk behavior among young people (Pärna et al., 2012). Whereas much statistical data are available on the amounts of alcohol that young people in Estonia consume, little is known about how and with whom they drink and which local drinking places and practices may facilitate excess drinking.

Drawing on recent research on geographies of alcohol, drinking and drunkenness (Jayne et al., 2011; 2012; Holloway et al., 2009) in Chapter 5 I argue that, when developing public health tools and alcohol policy, it is fruitful to view drinking practices and alcohol-related harms within their local (geographical) contexts. In line with Jayne et al. (2012) I argue that, whereas official government norms and guidelines exist to regulate drinking, in practice alcohol consumption is guided predominantly by complex local norms, expectations, identities and embodied experiences.

In Chapter 5 I focus on three locations identified as the most popular drinking places by the young people in my research - familial homes, a local hamburger kiosk and the outdoors. I examine the ways in which local opportunities and restrictions are expressed in and negotiated through these key drinking locations of young people in rural Estonia and the ways in which different aspects of individual drinking locations shape drinking practices.

The findings presented in Chapter 5 indicate that youth drinking practices as well as the drunkenness-related risks are relational and spatially contingent. Characteristics of individual drinking locations influence the negotiation of local and national opportunities, restrictions and attitudes towards drinking, and the associated risks. Different risks appear, for example, in relation to drinking in either public or private places. In line with the findings of Jayne et al. (2011) my data illustrate that official government guidelines or health campaigns on harmful alcohol consumption do not inform a 'decision situation' of young people. Rather, as Jayne et al. (2011) argue, drinking practices are shaped by cultural and inter-group norms, peer expectations and environmental stimuli. Therefore, I conclude that, when developing public health tools, it is fruitful to pay attention to the local context and specific places in which young people's drinking practices are negotiated.

6.3. Discussion

In this section I will concentrate on discussing three main themes that are interwoven throughout this thesis: belonging, exploring young people's perspectives and the importance of diversity on the local level.

The preceding chapters reflected on the multiplicity of ways that relationships to local people and places matter. These relationships collectively form the dimension of belonging to a place and a community (cf. Cuervo and Wyn, 2012). The idea of belonging is increasingly used in youth studies (Tilleczek, 2010), sociology (Back et al., 2012; Cuervo and Wyn, 2012), political studies (Lister, 2007) and geography (Aitchison et al., 2007; Wood and Waite, 2011; Trell et al., 2012). In research on young people's lives, the concept of belonging enables researchers to make more visible how youths are connected, to recognize young people's agency, decision-making processes and to acknowledge the complexity of young people's lives. In youth research, for example, it is often assumed that young people follow a relatively linear path to growing up and moving into adulthood (Cuervo and Wyn, 2012). Predetermined markers of progress, such as finishing education or starting a job are used to indicate and evaluate relevant changes, also in the context of Estonia. While education and labor market policies have significant implications for all young people, youth transition is much more messy and may not easily be captured in a linear graph (Cuervo and Wyn, 2012). In a recent research on youth transitions in rural Australia, Cuervo and Wyn (2012) point out that when researchers focus on relationships and belonging, it is possible to discover what is happening in the spaces between these big events (finishing education and starting a job) and to make the connections between social relationships (to people and place) and education and employment more visible. The findings of this thesis complement such research as they indicate, for example, that a sense of belonging and relationships with local people and places are crucial for rural young people, not only in terms of making sense of the world but also in providing practical resources and ways of getting by. This thesis suggests that exploring young people's lives through the dimension of belonging brings into

light the everyday processes that contribute to helping the young people making their lives work. In sum, this thesis thus contributes to the growing body of literature that focuses on belonging in exploring young people's lives and experiences.

In this thesis I have pointed out on several occasions the fruitfulness of focusing on the everyday context in addition to the larger scale. As indicated above, one benefit of focusing on the everyday, local level is that it is the key context in which a sense of belonging is grounded. Furthermore, this thesis shows that, especially when exploring young people's perspectives and lives, the focus on the everyday can yield rich, even surprising findings, especially for an adult researcher. One concrete example from this thesis is the central role of a small, for adults and passer-byes seemingly unimportant and unattractive place, such as the hamburger kiosk, in young people's lives and experiences. That place, which many of the local adults considered marginal and talked about in a condescending manner (Kärner, 2011), emerged from my data as a key place in young people's lives. For young men in particular, the hamburger kiosk was a relevant place for their rite of passage activities. As I noted before, adult researchers tend to begin with a set of assumptions and ask questions that satisfy their own interest, yet that may be irrelevant for young people themselves. Exploring everyday places and involving young people while doing this, provided me the possibility to focus better on places and topics that were central in young people's lives. Another example from this research that illustrates the contrast between what young people consider important and worthy of sharing and what adults want to know is the very specific information about the future plans of young people that the reviewers of my articles requested. During the research, I had asked young people to elaborate on their future plans but that was not something that they chose to talk about or considered central in their lives. Although they did discuss some future possibilities, hopes and ideas when asked, with a few exceptions, they were mostly looking ahead towards the next weekend and hanging out at the hamburger kiosk. My experiences with this research thus illustrate that focusing on the everyday level and doing research together with young people is certainly a useful way to begin to understand priorities and perspectives of young people.

In contrast to the negative representation of rural Estonia in national media and research reports (Saarniit, 1999; Alas, 2007; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010), the young people involved in data collection for this thesis as well as their peers, appeared mostly optimistic about their quality of life in rural Estonia. They did, nevertheless, have ideas for improvement, especially concerning the life of young people. On several occasions, the youth in my research emphasized the importance of being able to make a choice from a variety of opportunities, for spending free time as well as for self-realization. Although not all of them had concrete suggestions when asked what places or activities they would like to have, all emphasized the importance of having an opportunity to choose. An opportunity to choose and experiment with different activities was considered relevant for self-development and for better starting position in the future. To use the words of one of my research participants:

> ‘When certain things would just be there, I would certainly try new things. A skate park for example or something like that. Then I think I would try to use it with my bike or BMX. It is important to have opportunities to try different things and see if they suit you’ (Tõnis, male, 16).

Perhaps especially in the context of the national discourse of the ‘rural losers’ (Alas, 2007; Eesti Ekspress, 2010; Aavik, 2013), local opportunities and small scale accomplishments should not be undervalued. As the example of a local successful dancing group in this thesis illustrates, by showing that ‘people from the countryside can also become the best dancers in Estonia’ (Eneli, female, 18), local initiatives and opportunities also contribute to generating a positive group identity as well as rural identity. In addition, for young people, the possibility to engage in such activities can help to counterbalance the ‘rural dull’ (Rye, 2006).

6.4. Reflections on ethics and positionality in participatory research

In this section, I will reflect on some aspects of my research methods and approach focusing on research ethics when using participatory video with young people. In addition, I will give a brief reflection on my positionality.

The methods and approach adopted in this thesis reflect the broader developments in youth research as well as research in geography (Blazek and Hraňová, 2012). In 2003, Kindon first discussed participatory video as an accessible yet efficient tool for geographical research. Kindon (2003: 143) argues that participatory video has the potential to challenge ’conventional relationships of power’ characteristic for geographical fieldwork, especially those between researchers and participants from disadvantaged social groups (Blazek and Hraňová, 2012). That is particularly relevant in research with children and young people where the limits of language in exploring their experiences have been accentuated (Horton and Kraftl, 2006; Woodyer, 2008).

Throughout this thesis I have emphasized the popularity and benefits of video when working with young people in my research. Video was a motivation for many young people to join the research project, they were keen to learn about filming, experiment with cameras and editing and actively used video to represent their lives. As a result, a rich variety of data were created. The young people filmed and interviewed their school principal, their teachers and trainers, friends and peers, parents, local people and gatekeepers. As a part of the participatory research process, in order to learn and practice filming and video editing skills, young people made short movies about their favorite hang-out places and parties, a music-video of their Christmas ball and a movie about their peer’s perceptions of living in the countryside. In addition, as a spin off activity resulting from young people’s participation in the research project, they were involved in making a promotional movie about the local school. I can conclude that, in the case of my research, the use of video undoubtedly opened

up new spaces of expression, understanding and participation for those whose 'active presence in academic debates is marginalized by the prevalent insistence on the use of (rigorous) language in the production of knowledge' (Blazek and Hraňová, 2012: 153). However, the use of participatory video provided not just a novel style and opportunities for knowledge production, but also its own specific questions and challenges.

In the case of this research, at the point of presenting research findings, the different understandings of confidentiality between me as a researcher and young participants became a topic for discussion. There appeared to be a contrast between what I and the participants thought was acceptable to present to a public audience. For example, the participants seemed content and proud to share videos they had made (as a part of an individual video project), of partying and drinking heavily at their friend's birthday party (comments such as 'are we gonna be famous in Holland'? or 'let's put this up on Youtube' were made). On previous occasions which involved less sensitive situations the research participants had also questioned the need for anonymizing visual data and expressed an interest in being recognized by a broader public.

Previous research indicates that it is not uncommon for research participants to want to be identified in their visual images (Wiles et al., 2008), a similar situation to that which can emerge in text-based research (Grinyer, 2002). This appears to be particularly the case for children and young people (Renold, 2008; Prosser and Bagnoli, 2009). At the same time, the extent to which research participants 'are aware of the varying ways, and contexts in which images may be consumed is questionable as is their knowledge about the longevity of images in the public domain and the potential for future uses of images' (Wiles et al., 2008: 28). Thus, however much researchers may wish to employ a methodology which would maximize young people's agency in the research process, 'the presentation . . . is likely to require analyses and interpretations, at least for some purposes, which do demand differing knowledge than that generally available [to children] in order to explicate children's social status and structural positioning' (Mayall, 1994: 11) (though the same may apply for research carried out with adults). Therefore, as Wiles et al. (2008: 28) argue, it is important to recognize that 'collaboration with research participants on issues around anonymity and dissemination involve more than meeting participants' wishes'. This may mean making the decision not to use aspects of visual data to 'protect study participants from themselves' (Wiles et al., 2008: 28). In the case of this research, although I respected young people's autonomy in making decisions with regards to the project and the use of data, I considered that revealing their videos would compromise their and their friends' privacy and possibly have negative implications for them in the future. Therefore, in this case, the details of the video-data were not revealed. As an additional benefit in terms of the research process and the opportunity to build skills among research participants, such situations gave me a new opportunity to discuss the issues of anonymity and confidentiality with young people and to encourage them to actively consider their role as researchers and the possible indirect impacts of their own activities and data (see Flewitt, 2005 and Renold, 2008 for a detailed

discussion on the importance of negotiations with young people about confidentiality in visual research).

How to manage confidentiality in relation to visual material is one of the central ethical issues confronting visual researchers. Video material in particular can make the anonymisation of individuals or locations problematic if not impossible (Clark, 2006). Where visual data is used purely for elicitation purposes then questions of consent and anonymity are relatively unproblematic (Wiles et al., 2008). However, when researchers wish to include the videos or photos in dissemination of research then some particular issues of anonymity and consent may emerge. As indicated above, in the case of this research, young people made several movies displaying other people. They filmed their family, classmates and teachers and took the cameras to parties and other social events they attended together with friends. Although the young people who make a movie were aware of the aim of the research project, the people filmed had not necessarily given their consent to be in the movie. And even if they had, according to Rose (2007), they are unlikely to know the purposes to which the video may be put. Thus, giving research participants cameras to take images reflecting their lives may invade other people's privacy, make them feel uncomfortable or put them in a vulnerable position as the case with young people who were filmed drinking heavily at the party-video illustrates. Therefore, although the participants who make the video legally own the copyright to the movie as authors, ethically, it may not be sufficient to ask participants to provide consent for the use of the videos they have produced. Rather, it may be necessary to ask all the people who appear on the video for their consent before the images can be used. This situation is more complicated when research participants make videos or take photos for the purposes of a research project but use the images as they see fit, which may not accord with the aims of the project. Wiles et al. (2008: 22) argue that this can be a 'particular problem with young people who may post photos or video created for research purposes on Facebook or other internet sites'. In the case of this project, the participants took the cameras to use for their individual project thus had the possibility to save their images and movies on their computer. However, I was not aware of anybody taking that opportunity and eventually the participants seemed more interested in saving solely our finalized movies and keeping the photos that I had taken of them in the research process. A few photos that I had made of the participants 'in action' were, eventually, indeed displayed by these young people on Facebook. Possible consequences of giving participants cameras for individual projects should thus carefully be considered by the researchers and discussed with the participants in advance.

Finally, concerning my positionality, I am aware that my background, personal characteristics and the fact that I was considering myself to still be part of the category 'youth' (also the fact that the young people considered me to be somebody of their age) had an influence on the research process and the outcomes. The youths in this project did not see me as somebody of great authority, which was useful in terms of creating an informal atmosphere for the meetings and making them take control over the project. It was, however, less useful for

keeping the attention of the group during our meetings. In addition, I am aware that the research participants may have chosen to present themselves in certain ways because of the way they perceived me. For example, me being a young female researcher could have influenced the ways that the young men in the last project, which focused on gender identities and geographies of alcohol, presented themselves. I noticed that the young men frequently made a 'performance' of challenging and ridiculing each other in my presence. It also seemed important for them to demonstrate their strength and daring. For example, they often discussed and pointed out places where fights had taken place or places where they or their friends had raced and crashed a car. Furthermore, in the individual video-projects, it was clear from the narrations of young people's movies that they were addressing me as their audience. As a result, the participants may have chosen different ways to present themselves and those ways may differ from their everyday reality (cf. Gianotti, 2004). Thus, even though when choosing to introduce the individual projects as a part of this research my aim was to give young people more freedom of expression and not to influence the data collection with my presence, I was present nevertheless.

6.5. Suggestions for further research

The aim of this thesis was to explore rural realities as experienced by young people living in Estonian countryside. My data indicate that most of the young people I studied appeared to be attached to and to value living in their rural home town. However, the age-group we focused on was young people in their last years of high school, and most of them saw their future connected to the urban context. A move to a city was considered necessary in order to continue their studies, to find work or a partner. However, some young people were determined to stay or to return to their home town after their studies or temporary move to a city of abroad. It was not in the scope of this research to explore the lives and motives of young people who stay in rural areas or return to their home town. In the light of the concerns about the future of rural areas, the stagnation and the associated problems, I believe that the motivation of young people in particular to stay or to return to rural areas requires further examination. Following from that, the ways that young people who stay or return find a way for making it work within disadvantage could be explored. Furthermore, the connections between a sense of belonging, well-being and migration could be given more attention to. Some inspiration could be drawn from research in other contexts, for example the Netherlands, where a recent study by Bijker et al. (2012) explored the motivations for people to move to the so-called not-popular rural areas, or Norway, where Bye (2009) examined the lives of young men who stay in rural areas.

During my research project in Järva-Jaani, the short-term work migration of Estonians to foreign countries was in the spotlight in Estonian media. In addition, in rural areas, many of the parents shared their time between their work in the (capital) city and their home in the countryside. When talking to the young people in my research group, indeed, it appeared

that everybody had or knew a friend with one or both parents who spent up to a month at a time working abroad. To illustrate, one boy (17) from my research group was living alone three weeks at a time because his mother was working in Germany and his father in Tallinn. Another boy (16) from the group saw his father once in two weeks because of his job in Finland. Yet another boy (16) was living at his grandparents place or alone in what he called his apartment while his father had moved away to work in Tallinn. It struck me how independent these young people had to be. For example, they had to very carefully plan their allowance not to get into financial trouble with sustaining themselves while the parents were gone. Also, when they did get in trouble, financial or otherwise, the parents could not be around to help. Short-term work-migration, especially to Finland has started to receive increasing attention in Estonian media, mostly in connection to possibilities and problems that arise for the people who choose to migrate. However, my research indicates that the influence of the work-migration on rural young people's daily lives and well-being should be studied more carefully.

A potentially fruitful continuation for this study could be to compare the everyday lives of young people in rural and urban context. The topics identified in this study as important in young people's lives could be used as a starting point. For example, in order to create better public health tools it would be useful to find out, whether alcohol-related risks young people face are the same or different in rural and urban context. What context-specific solutions can be identified? In addition, following from above, in what ways does the work-migration of parents in both, urban and rural Estonia, influence young people's well-being? Furthermore, focusing on the sense of belonging, what aspects contribute to Estonian urban young people's attachment to their places? Are those aspects the same or different from the ones found for rural young people? And is there a relationship between place attachment and future plans and actions of young people? Those are some questions that could be explored in a comparative context to shed more light on young people's well-being and the difference that a place makes.

Focusing on the research methods, throughout the thesis I emphasized the benefits of the visual research methods, in particular participatory video, for engaging young people in the research process and exploring their daily lives and places. However, as indicated above, I also faced a number of challenges in the process. Following on from the discussion above, I believe more attention could be paid to the possibilities and obstacles for disseminating research results in the form of a video. Even though the academic sphere is dominated by textual accounts, disseminating research results as a video can be rewarding as it has the potential to reach and engage a broader audience thereby creating wider impacts (cf. Blazek and Hraňová, 2012). As the research by Blazek and Hraňová (2012) indicates, video can bridge academics and the wider public and is accessible and attractive to diverse audiences, including young people, social workers and policy-makers. Considering also the growing popularity of visual methods in data collection (Pink, 2007), it would be timely and important to explore different possibilities for disseminating research results in the form of a video. My

experiences with this research show that it is worthwhile to explore in more detail the possible ways to balance the principle of anonymisation with the necessity to reveal different aspects of researched phenomena which may not be revealed by the text alone.

Finally, while interest in young people's lives in East and Central Europe has often centered on exploring the broader social, political and economic processes and their impact on youth well-being and living conditions (cf. Taimalu et al., 2007; Krevs, 2008), this study shows that the everyday, local places also play an important role in young people's lives and well-being. The explorations in this thesis suggest a number of ways in which local everyday places influence youth practices and experiences and by extension their well-being. Based on my findings I can conclude that an appreciation and understanding of the everyday 'rural realities' not only suggests new perspectives on the rural, but also expands the contexts within which we can examine global topics such as change, well-being and belonging.

REFERENCES

Aavik, M., 2013. Arvamus. Marti Aavik: pruudipõud. Postimees. Available at: http://arvamus.postimees.ee/1091570/marti-aavik-pruudipoud. [Accessed: 15.02.2013].

Aitchison C., Hopkins, P., Kwan, M-P., 2007. Geographies of Muslim Identities: Diaspora, Gender and Belonging. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Alas, J., 2007. Estonia addresses its redneck problem. The Baltic Times. Available at: http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17538/. [Accessed: 13.02.2013].

Altman, I., Low, S.M. (Eds.), 1992. Place Attachment. New York: Plenum Press.

Back, L., Sinha, S. and Bryan, C., 2012. New hierarchies of belonging. European Journal of Cultural Studies 15(2) 139–154.

Bijker, R., Haartsen, T., Strijker, D., 2012. Migration to less-popular rural areas in the Netherlands: Exploring the motivations. Journal of Rural Studies 28: 4, 490–498.

Blazek, M., Hraňová, P. (2012): Emerging relationships and diverse motivations and benefits in participatory video with young people, Children's Geographies, 10:2, 151-168.

Bonnes, M., Lee, T., Bonaiuto, M. (Eds.), 2003. Psychological Theories for Environmental Issues. Ashgate, Aldershot.

Butler, J., 1990. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. Routledge, London.

Bye, L.M., 2009. 'How to be a rural man': Young men's performances and negotiations of rural masculinities. Journal of Rural Studies 25, 278-288.

Clark, A. (2006) Anonymising research data. Real Life Methods Working Paper. Available at: http://www.reallifemethods.ac.uk/publications/workingpapers/2006-12-rlm-clark.pdf [Accessed: 18.02.2013].

Cosgrove, D.E., Jackson, P., 1987. New Directions in Cultural Geography. Area 19, 95–101.

Cuervo, H., Wyn, J., 2012. Young people making it work: Continuity and change in rural places. Melbourne University Publishing.

Eesti Ekspress, 2010. Ääremaadel suur puudus pruutidest [online]. Available at: http://www.postimees.ee/287801/eesti-aaremaad-pruudiprobleem-vahenev-demokraatia-ja-soltuvus-toimetulekutoetusest/ [Accessed: 11.05.2012].

Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & Committee for Sustainable Development.

Evans, B., 2008. 'Geographies of Youth/Young People.' Geography Compass 2: 5, 1659-1680.

Flewitt, R., 2005. Conducting research with young children: some ethical considerations. Early Child Development and Care 175: 6, 553-565.

Gianotti, E., 2004. Through the lens of the camera in remote mining sites in the Peruvian highlands. Visual Studies 19:2, 126-134.

Gibson, J.J., 1979. The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception. Houghton Mifflin, Michigan.

Grinyer, A., 2002. The anonymity of research participants: assumptions, ethics and practicalities. Social Research Update 36.

Holloway, S.L., Valentine, G. and Jayne, M., 2009. Masculinities, femininities and the geographies of public and private drinking landscapes. Geoforum 40, 821-831.

Hopkins, P., Pain, R., 2007. Geographies of age: thinking relationally. Area 39, 287-294.

Horton, J., Kraftl, P., 2006. 'What else? Some more ways of thinking about and doing children's geographies.' Children's Geographies 4:1, 69-95.

Jayne, M., Valentine, G. and Holloway, S.L., 2011. Alcohol, Drinking, Drunkenness. (Dis)Orderly Spaces. Ashgate, Surrey.

Jayne, M., Valentine, G. and Holloway, S.L., 2012. What Use Are Units? Critical Geographies of Alcohol Policy. Antipode 44, 828-846.

Kärner, S., 2011. Interview about Järva-Jaani high school and young people in Järva-Jaani. 26.01.2011. Elen-Maarja Trell.

Kay, R., Shubin, S., Thelen, T., 2012. Rural realities in the post-socialist space. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 55-62.

Kindon, S., 2003. Participatory video in geographic research: a feminist practice of looking? Area, 35: 2, 142-153.

Kovacheva, S., 2002. The social construction of youth in late post-communism. In: Lagree, J.C. (Ed.), Rolling Youth, Rocking Society. Youth Take Part in the Post- modern Debate on Globalization. UNESCO.

Krevs, M. (2008) Sense of place and quality of life in post-socialist societies. Eyles, J. and Williams, A. (Eds)(2008) Sense of place, health and quality of life. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 135-152.

Lister, R., 2007. Why Citizenship: Where, When and How Children? Theoretical Inquiries in Law 8: 2, 693-718.

Machácek, L., 1998. Youth in the Processes of Transition and Modernisation in Slovak Republic. Czech Sociological Review 6: 1, 103-115.

Manzo, L., Perkins, D., 2006. Finding Common Ground: The Importance Of Place Attachment To Community Participation And Planning. Journal Of Planning Literature 20, 335-50.

Mayall, B., 1994. Children in action at home and school. In: B. Mayall, (ed.) Children's childhoods: observed and experienced. London: Falmer Press, 114–127.

Pärna, K., Tael, M., Ringmets, I. and Aasvee, K., 2012. Alcohol Consumption Among Adolescents in Estonia 1994-2010. In Maddock, J. (ed.) Public Health - Social and Behavioral Health, InTech.

Pretty, G.H., Chipuer, H.M., Bramston, P., 2003. 'Sense of place amongst adolescents and adults in two rural Australian towns: The discriminating features of place attachment, sense of community and place dependence in relation to place identity'. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 23, 273–287.

Prosser, J., Bagnoli, A., 2009. 'Exploring Young People's Lives: Using Visual Methods within a Qualitative Longitudinal Research Study', in M. Martha Lengeling (ed.) Selection of Articles from the Second International Qualitative Research Conference, Universidad de Guanajuato, Mexico: Imprenta Universitaria, 265-274.

Renold, E., Holland, S., Ross, N., Hillman, A., 2008. 'Becoming participant': problematizing 'informed consent' in participatory research with young people in care. Qualitative Social Work 7: 4, 427-447.

Robson, E., Porter, G., Hampshire, K., and Bourdillon, M., 2009. 'Doing it right?': Working with young researchers in Malawi to investigate children, transport and mobility. Children's Geographies, 7, 467-480.

Rose, G., 2007. Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials Second Edition. London: Sage.

Rye, J.F., 2006. Rural youths' images of the rural. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 409-421.

Saarniit, J., 1999. Estonian rural young people. In: Helve, H. (Ed.), A Comparative Study of Living Conditions and Participation of Rural Young People in Changing Europe. European Commission (RYPE) Report, pp. 8-20.

Stenning, A., Hörschelmann, K., 2008. History, Geography and Difference in the Post-socialist World: Or, Do We Still Need Post-Socialism? Antipode 40, 312-335.

Taimalu, M., Lahikainen, A.R., Korhonen, P., Kraav, I., 2007. Self-reported fears as indocators of young children's well-being in societal change: a cross-cultural perspective. Social Indicators Research 80, 51-78.

Tilleczek, K., 2010. Approaching youth studies: Being, becoming and belonging. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., 2012. Place attachment in rural areas: a participatory research project with youth in Cedar, British Columbia. In ten Toonder (Ed.) Re-exploring Canadian space / Redécouvrir l'espace canadien. Cahiers, Canada.

Trell, E., van Hoven, B., Huigen, P., 2012. 'It's good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can't stay here': Youth and belonging in rural Estonia. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 139-148.

Valentine, G., 2007. Theorizing and Researching Intersectionality: A Challenge for Feminist Geography. The Professional Geographer 59, 10-21.

Wiles, R., Prosser, J., Bagnoli, A., Clark, A., Davies, K., Holland, S., Renold, E., 2008. Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research. ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper. Available at: http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/421/. [Accessed: 18.02.2013].

Willis, P., 1981. Cultural production is different from cultural reproduction is different from social reproduction is different from reproduction. Interchange, 12 (2-3), 48-67.

Wood, N., Waite, L., 2011. Editorial: Scales of belonging. Emotion, Space and Society 4: 4, 201–202.

Woodyer, T., 2008. The body as research tool: embodied practice and children's geographies. Children's Geographies, 6: 4, 349-362.

Nederlandse samenvatting

Rurale realiteiten. Dagelijkse plekken en praktijken van jongeren op het Estlandse platteland

Hoewel er relatief veel bekend is over de meer grootschalige processen achter de rurale herstructurering en de economische achteruitgang in Estland, is er maar vrij weinig onderzoek verricht naar hoe mensen deze processen hebben ervaren en hoe de levens van de huidige bewoners van het platteland eruitzien. Tot nog toe zijn er voornamelijk grootschalige (inter)nationale vergelijkende, veelal kwantitatieve studies gedaan van rurale plekken en levens (Helve, 1999; Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010). Binnen een dergelijke context blijven de ambiguïteiten en diversiteiten van de levens van de rurale bevolking vaak onderbelicht, en worden de rol van de plattelandsbewoner en de invloed van allerlei niet-agrarische instellingen, praktijken en relaties op rurale levens en plekken niet in acht genomen (Kay et al., 2012). Het resultaat is, volgens Kay et al. (2012), dat er doorgaans een nogal mono-dimensionaal beeld bestaat van de plattelandsbevolking en -plaatsen als 'losers' binnen de algemene context van politieke en economische verandering. Terwijl stadsbewoners bijvoorbeeld worden gezien als proactief en doelgericht in het omgaan met veranderingen, worden hun rurale tegenhangers vaak afgeschilderd als 'objecten' van transitie, die niet in staat zouden zijn om te gaan met of zich aan te passen aan de snelheid en omvang van verandering (Kay et al., 2012; cv. Schafft, 2000).

De afgelopen jaren heeft een aantal auteurs gewezen op de noodzaak voor verdere discussie en een diepgaander, gedetailleerder begrip van de post-socialistische rurale context (Shubin, 2006; Gorlach et al., 2008; Kay et al., 2012). Er zou vooral meer aandacht moeten worden besteed aan diversiteit en het dagelijkse leven, de rol van de rurale bevolking en de lokale omgeving, in combinatie met kwalitatieve, 'on the ground' onderzoeksmethoden (Kay et al., 2012; cf. Hörschelmann, 2002; Van Hoven en Meijering, 2011).

In dit proefschrift is het dan ook mijn doel om inzicht te bieden in de dagelijkse 'rurale realiteit' in Estland, zoals deze wordt ervaren en gepraktiseerd door jongeren die op het platteland wonen. Ik bestudeer de levens van jongeren en de rurale Estlandse context vanuit een cultureel-geografisch perspectief, waarbij de focus ligt op de relatie tussen mensen en plaatsen. In mijn proefschrift staan de stemmen en plekken van jongeren centraal. Tegen de achtergrond van achteruitgang en marginalisering van het platteland, ben ik geïnteresseerd in hoe jongeren actief omgaan met de rurale context in Estland. Ik richt mij daarbij vooral op de omgang van jongeren met en hun praktijken in de dagelijkse context op het lokale niveau.

Wat betreft de focus op jongeren sluit ik me aan bij Taimalu et al. (2007) en Blazek en Smith (2009), die stellen dat binnen bredere (inter)nationale studies (bijvoorbeeld Helve, 1999;

Estonian National Institute for Health Development, 2004; Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010) de perspectieven en meningen van jongeren grotendeels onzichtbaar blijven. In dergelijke studies worden jongeren vaak gepositioneerd als passieve subjecten. De jongeren zelf worden vaak genegeerd, terwijl zij de meest waardevolle bron van informatie kunnen zijn voor het beschrijven van hun eigen levens en plekken (James et al., 1998; Matthews, 2003; Ansell, 2009). In dit proefschrift daarentegen nemen de stemmen en plekken van *jongeren* een centrale plaats in. De interesse in het exploreren van de perspectieven en ervaringen van jongeren is duidelijk ingebed in mijn methodologische aanpak. In mijn proefschrift maak ik gebruik van een mengeling van visuele en (inter)actieve onderzoeksmethoden (zoals video, 'go-along' interviews, fotografie en 'mental mapping'), waarbij een participerende onderzoeksmethode is gevolgd. Op deze wijze heb ik geprobeerd om jongeren met verschillende vaardigheden en interesses de flexibiliteit en motivatie te verschaffen om aan het onderzoek deel te nemen en hun meningen en gevoelens te verwoorden. Zo besteed ik niet alleen aandacht aan de alledaagse 'plekken van interactie' van jongeren, maar geef ik hun ook een expliciete rol als onderwerp en deelnemer aan het onderzoek.

Het onderzoek in dit proefschrift duidt erop dat hoewel de bredere sociale, politieke en economische processen een sterke invloed hebben op de leefomstandigheden van jongeren, de dagelijkse, lokale omgeving ook een belangrijke rol speelt in hun leven en welzijn. Uit de resultaten in Hoofdstuk 3, bijvoorbeeld, blijkt dat de plekken waar rurale jongeren zich thuis voelen, de ervaringen en vaardigheden die ze daar opdoen, alsmede hun opgedane informele sociale contacten, een basis kunnen bieden voor het leggen van contacten met de oudere generatie, het vormen van vriendschappen met leeftijdsgenoten en, op die wijze, de omgang met bepaalde structurele onzekerheden. In Hoofdstuk 3 benadruk ik dat de toegang tot zeer specifieke plekken waar jongeren zich geborgen weten, en de praktijken die daar worden gebezigd, hun een breder gevoel van verbondenheid kan geven met hun woonplaats. Ik teken daarbij echter aan dat deze verbondenheid ambigu is: ondanks het gevoel van thuishoren, zagen de jongeren in dit onderzoek geen toekomst weggelegd voor zichzelf in hun woonplaats. Hoofdstuk 4 concentreert zich op het belang voor jongeren van de lokale omgeving voor het verschaffen van (fysieke en sociale) hulpbronnen voor het uiten van diverse aspecten van hun identiteit. In Hoofdstuk 4 verken ik hoe jonge mannen hun mannelijke identiteit tot uiting brengen. De resultaten duiden erop dat de sociale en fysieke hulpbronnen die worden geboden door verschillende plekken zowel mogelijkheden als restricties vormen voor het uitdragen van verschillende aspecten van de eigen identiteit. De natuurlijke omgeving stelde de jonge mannen in dit onderzoek bijvoorbeeld in staat om bepaalde praktische vaardigheden te laten zien, hun leidinggevende kwaliteiten te demonstreren, hun stoerheid en moed, en zich op deze manier te onderscheiden als mannen. Hulpbronnen in de context van feesten binnenshuis stelden jonge mannen daarentegen in staat om masculiniteit te ontwikkelen in relatie tot sociale vaardigheden en de interactie met vrouwen, en boden hun de mogelijkheid zich te laten gaan en de controle te verliezen door, bijvoorbeeld, alcoholgebruik. De verkenningen in Hoofdstuk 5

benadrukken dat, hoewel lokale plekken uitnodigend en prettig kunnen zijn, deze ook kunnen worden ervaren en gezien als bedreigend en gevaarlijk, en dat ze nadelige effecten kunnen hebben op het welzijn van jongeren. In Hoofdstuk 5 bespreek ik de plaatsen en activiteiten waarbij jongeren alcohol drinken. Mijn bevindingen wijzen erop dat de drinkgewoonten van jongeren en de risico's van dronkenschap samenhangen met specifieke relaties en plekken. De data wijzen er bijvoorbeeld op dat, vanwege het private karakter, de thuisomgeving een plek biedt voor jongeren om te drinken die relatief risicovrij is in termen van zichtbaarheid en mogelijke conflicten met 'anderen'. In openbare gelegenheden zijn jongeren veel zichtbaarder, en staan ze in directer contact met 'anderen' die hun drinkgedrag beïnvloeden en een risico kunnen vormen. De resultaten in Hoofdstuk 5 wijzen erop dat, van de activiteiten waarbij rurale jongeren alcohol drinken, , met name 'bush parties' op afgelegen plekken in de buitenlucht – die toegankelijk zijn voor iedereen, maar buiten het zicht liggen van volwassenen – gepaard gaan met grote risico's voor het welzijn van jonge mannen (cf. Stoduto et al., 1998).

Met betrekking tot de gevolgde onderzoeksmethoden in dit proefschrift, benadruk ik voortdurend de voordelen die visuele onderzoeksmethoden – met name participerende video – bieden voor het betrekken van jongeren in het onderzoeksproces en het exploreren van hun dagelijkse levens en praktijken. Dit proefschrift laat zien dat het combineren van verschillende 'nieuwe' visuele en (inter)actieve methoden (zoals video, fotografie, 'mental mapping, en 'go-along' interviews) onderzoekers beter in staat stelt om de verschillende aspecten van de mens-plaatsrelatie te vangen. In Hoofdstuk 2, bijvoorbeeld, stel ik dat methoden die kunnen worden gebruikt 'in het veld' – zoals video en 'go-along' interviews – de mogelijkheid scheppen voor deelnemers om de omgeving direct te ervaren en te communiceren middels zintuigelijke waarneming (reuk, tast, auditief en visueel). Op deze wijze draagt de omgeving bij aan de productie van kennis, in de vorm van losgemaakte reacties, verhalen en emoties. Door te laten zien dat mensen op velerlei manieren in relatie staan tot de plek waar ze zich bevinden, kunnen de 'nieuwe' onderzoeksmethoden potentieel bijdragen aan een beter begrip van een aantal belangrijke onderwerpen die de kern vormen van geografisch onderzoek.

Tenslotte: de interesse in het leven van jongeren in Oost- en Centraal Europa richt zich vaak op het verkennen van sociale, economische en politieke processen, en de impact daarvan op het welzijn en de leefomstandigheden van jongeren (cf. Taimalu et al., 2007; Krevs, 2008). Het onderzoek verricht in dit proefschrift wijst er echter op dat er verschillende manieren bestaan waarop de lokale, alledaagse omgeving effect heeft op de praktijken en ervaringen van jongeren en, bijgevolg, van invloed is op hun welzijn. Op basis van mijn bevindingen kan ik concluderen dat een waardering en begrip van alledaagse 'rurale realiteiten' niet alleen nieuwe perspectieven biedt op de rurale omgeving, maar ook de context verbreedt waarbinnen we mondiale onderwerpen zoals verandering, welzijn en lokale verbondenheid kunnen onderzoeken.

REFERENCES

Ansell, N., 2009. Childhood and the politics of scale: descaling children's geographies? Progress in Human Geography 33 (2), 190- 209.

Blazek, M., Smith, F., 2009. Children's Place in Networks of Childcare in Slovakia: what Childhood and Gender tell us about Post -Socialism. Annals of West University of Timisoara Series GEOGRAPHY 19, 121-132.

Estonian Human Asset Report, 2010. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & Committee for Sustainable Development.

Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007. Estonian Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 [Eesti Maaelu Arengukava 2007-2013]. Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, Tallinn.

Estonian National Institute for Health Development, 2004. Estonian Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) Country Report. Estonian National Institute for Health Development, Tallinn.

Gorlach, K., Lošťák, M., Mooney, P.H., 2008. Agriculture, communities, and new social movements: East European ruralities in the process of restructuring. Journal of Rural Studies, 24 (2) , 161-171.

Helve, H., (Ed.), 1999. A Comparative Study of Living Conditions and Participation of Rural Young People in Changing Europe. European Commission (RYPE) Report.

Hörschelmann, K., 2002. History after the end: post-socialist difference in a (post) modern world. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 27 (1), 52-66.

James, A., Jenks,C., Prout, A., 1998. Theorizing Childhood. Polity Press.

Kay, R., Shubin, S., Thelen, T., 2012. Rural realities in the post-socialist space. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 55-62.

Matthews, M., 2003. Children and regeneration: setting an agenda for community participation and integration. Children & Society, 17 (4), 264-276.

Schafft, K.A., 2000. A network approach to understanding post-socialist rural inequality in the 1990s. Eastern European Countryside 6, 25–40.

Shubin, S., 2006. The changing nature of rurality and rural studies in Russia. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 422–440.

Stoduto, G., Adlaf, E.M., Mann, R.E. (1998). Adolescents, Bush Parties and Drinking-Driving. Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 59, 544-548.

Taimalu, M., Lahikainen, A.R., Korhonen, P., Kraav, I., 2007. Self-reported fears as indocators of young children's well-being in societal change: a cross-cultural perspective. Social Indicators Research 80, 51-78.

Eestikeelne kokkuvõte

Elu maal. Noorte igapäevaelu Eesti maakohtades

Doktoritöö käsitleb noorte igapäeva elu Eesti maakohtades ühiskondlike ja keskkondlike muutuste taustal[1]. Analüüsin noorte arvamusi ja kogemusi igapäevaelust Eesti maakohtades. Keskendun põhilistele igapäevakohtadele, mis on noorte jaoks olulised ja uurin, kuidas need kohad noorte identiteeti, kuuluvustunnet, probleemset käitumist ja heaolu mõjutavad. Töö on kirjutatud kultuuri-geograafi perpektiivist lähtudes, keskendudes inimeste ja kohtade vahelistele suhetele[2].

Eesti kontekstis on üldisemaid maaelu ja maakohtade ümbestruktureerimise ja majanduslangusega seotud protsesse ja probleeme suhteliselt laialdaselt käsitletud (Helve, 1999; Põllumajandusministeerium, 2007; Eesti Inimarengu Aruanne, 2010; Eesti Inimvara Raport, 2010). Samas keskenduvad vähesed uuringud sellele, kuidas maapiirkondades elavad inimesed neid protsesse ise on kogenud ja nendega toime tulevad ning milline on igapäevaelu muutuvates maapiirkondades. Kay et al. (2012: 55) väidavad, et suuremahulised kvantitatiivsed uuringud ei ole suutnud kajastada maaelu mitmekesisust, inimeste agentsust ega ka erinevate mitte-põllumajanduslike institutsioonide, struktuuride ja suhete mõju maaelule ja maakohtadele. Selle tulemusena on loodud üsna ühekülgne pilt maapiirkondadest ja nende elanikkonnast kui poliitiliste ja majanduslike muutuste tõttu tekkinud 'kaotajatest' (Kay et al, 2012: 55). Samal ajal kui linnaelanikke kirjeldatakse proaktiivsete kodanikena, kes võtavad aktiivse hoiaku muutustega toimetulekuks, kujutatakse maaelanikke kui 'üleminekuaja objekte', kes ei suuda muutuste kiiruse ja ulatuslikkusega toime tulla ega kohaneda (Kay et al., 2012: 55; vt ka Schafft, 2000).

Lähiminevikus on mitmed teadurid osutanud vajadusele kujundada täpsemalt nüanseeritud arusaam post-sotsialistlike maakpiirkondade ja maaelu kohta (Shubin, 2006; Gorlach, et al., 2008; Kay et al., 2012). Eriliselt soovitatakse keskenduda mitmekesisuse märkamisele ja inimeste igapäevaelu, kohtade ja agentsuse kajastamisele kasutades selleks kvalitatiivseid uurimismeetodeid (Kay et al., 2012; vt ka Hörschelmann, 2002). Eelpooltoodud ülekutsetest ja maapiirkondade igapäevaelu mitmekesisust kajastavate uuringute puudulikkusest lähtudes on selle doktoritöö eesmärk kajastada 'igapäevaelu tegelikkust maal' läbi noorte kogemuste ja tegemiste. Uurin noorte inimeste elu, tegevusi ja tulevikuplaane maakohtades toimuvate muutuste taustal ja keskendun noorte tähtsaimate igapäevakohtade rollile nende heaolu kujundamisel.

[1] Kokkuvõte doktoritööst on lihtustav ning seda kirjutades on peetud silmas loetavust ka mitteakadeemilise lugeja jaoks. Täpsema ja üksikasjalikuma ülevaate saamiseks soovitan tutvuda doktoritöö inglisekeelse kokkuvõtte ja järeldustega.

[2] Eestikeelse lühiülevaate saamiseks kultuurigeograafiast soovitan lugeda Helen Sooväli (2008) artiklit *'Kultuurigeograafia'*

Doktoritöös on kajastatud noorte elu ja kogemusi, sest (sarnaselt Taimalu et al., 2007 ja Blazek ja Smith, 2009 järeldustele) leian, et rahvusvahelistes (suuremahulistes võrdlevates ja kvantitatiivsetes) uuringutes (e.g. Helve, 1999; Tervise Arengu Instituut, 2004; Eesti Inimvara Raport, 2010) on noorte arvamused ning perspektiivid jäänud tahaplaanile. Samas on noored ise ühed paremad asjatundjad oma igapäevaelu, heaolu ja tegemiste vallas (James et al. 1998; Matthews 2003; Ansell 2009). Seetõttu on käesolevas doktoritöös kesksel kohal just noorte enda arvamused, igapäevakohad ja kogemused. Minu huvi noorte enda arvamuste ja perspektiivide vastu kajastub doktoritöös kasutatud metoodikas. Kuna üheks doktoritöö eesmärgiks oli erinevate huvide ja oskustega noori võimalikult aktiivselt uuringus kaasata, kasutasin doktoritöös andmete kogumiseks erinevaid visuaalseid ja interaktiivseid uurimismeetodeid (video, (*'go-along'*) intervjuud, fotograafia, '*mental mapping'*) ja osalus-tegevusuuringu lähenemist (*participatory approach*). Seega keskendun käesolevas töös lisaks noorte igapäeva-keskkonna uurimisele ka nende agentsusele uuringu subjektide ja osalejatena.

Doktoritöö tulemused näitavad, et kuigi sotsiaal-majanduslikud muutused mõjutavad tugevalt noorte elukvaliteeti, ei tohiks alahinnata igapäevakohtade rolli noorte elu ja heaolu kujundajatena. Igapäevakohad, on kohad, kus noored tihti viibivad ja millega nende tegevused, kogemused ja mälestused tihedalt põimuvad. Need on kohad, millega noored tunnevad reeglina lähedast seotust (*Peatükk 3*). Kogemused, mida noored sellistest kohtadest saavad ja oskused, mida nad seal õpivad, aga samuti sotsiaalsed kontaktid, mida nad nende kohtade kaudu loovad, aitavad kaasa nende toimetulekuks struktuursete muutustega (*Peatükk 3*). *Peatükis 3* rõhutan noortele oluliste igapäevakohtade tähtsust noorte hoiakute ja seotuse kujundajana oma kodulinna/koduküla suhtes. Samas näitavad doktoritöö tulemused, et selline seotus võib olla suhteline, sest vaatamata hoolimisele ja seotusetundele ei ole noortel praktikas tihti võimalik oma elu maakohtadega siduda. Minu uuringus osalenud noored nägid näiteks oma tulevikku seotuna eelkõige linnakeskkonnaga, kus on suurem võimalus omandada kõrgem haridus, soetada parem töökoht või valida sobivam partner. *Peatükis 4* keskendun sellele, kuidas noored mehed kasutavad kohalikke sotsiaalseid ja füüsilisi ressursse oma maskulliinse identiteeti kujundamiseks. Doktoritöö tulemused näitavad, et erinevad igapäevakohad pakuvad noortele erinevaid ressursse, võimalusi ja takistusi identiteedi erinevate aspektide väljendamiseks ja kujundamiseks. Näiteks võimaldab looduskeskkond noortel meetel demonstreerida oma oskusi kontrolli säilitamisel, samuti näidata oma tugevust ja julgust ning seeläbi rõhutada enda tõelist mehelikkust. Kontrastina võimaldavad kodus peetud peod noortel meestel oma maskuliinsust kujundada läbi sotsiaalsete ja vastassugupoolega suhtlemise oskuste ning võime ennast alkoholi tarbides 'vabaks lasta' (*Peatükk 4*). *Peatükis 5* rõhutan, et kuigi igapäevakohad võivad olla meeldivad ja tähendusrikkad, võivad nad samal ajal olla ka vaenulikud ja ohtlikud ning seega noorte heaolule vastuolulist mõju avaldada. *Peatükis 5* käsitlen kohti, kus noored tarbivad alkoholi. Järeldan, et alkoholi tarbimine ja sellega seotud riskid on suhtelised ja tihedalt seotud kontekstiga, kus alkoholi tarbitakse (*Peatükk 5*). Nii näiteks on kodu noorte alkoholi tarbimise keskkonnana näiteks suhteliselt ohutu, kuna see

on eravaldus ja kodus korraldatud pidudel osalevad reeglina lähedasemad sõbrad nii et seal praktiliselt puudub kõrvaliste isikutega konflikti sattumise võimalus. Samas on oht, et noored kipuvad koduses turvalises keskkonnas kontrolli kaotama, eksperimenteerima ja alkoholi kuritarvitama. Avalikes kohtades on sotsiaalne kontroll tihti tugevam kui koduses keskkonnas, aga samas on ka noorte alkoholi tarbimine ja sellega seotud riskid kõrvaliste isikute poolt palju mõjutatavamad. Doktoritöö tulemused näitavad, et noortele ohtlikud situatsioonid ja alkoholi tarvitamisega seotud konfliktid kipuvad tekkima küla- või linnakeskusest eemalasuvatel vabaõhualadel (*Peatükk 5*). Sellised kohad on erinevatele (noorte)gruppidele vabalt ligipääsetavad, aga samas vastutavate täiskasvanute pilgu ja kontrolli alt väljas. Noorte tervise ja heaolu seisukohalt on just selline alkoholi tarbimise kontekst üks ohtlikumaid (vt ka Stoduto et al., 1998).

Käesolevas doktoritöös rõhutan korduvalt visuaalsete uurimismeetodite, eriti kaasava video, (*participatory video*) eeliseid, et noori teaduslikku uurimustöösse kaasata ning nende arvamusi ja igapäevakohti uurida. Leian, et visuaalsete ja (inter)aktiivsete uurimismeetodite (i.e. video, fotograafia, *'mental mapping'*, *'go-along'* intervjuud) kasutamine võimaldab uurijatel paremini erinevaid inimese-ruumi suhteid uurida. Näiteks video või *'go-along'* intervjuu puhul on uuringus osalejad sellel ajal, kui nad oma igapäeva kohtadest, kogemustest ja tegemistest räägivad, füüsiliselt konkreetsetes kohtades kohal. Selline vahetu kohalolek võimaldab uuringus osalejatel uurijale mitmekülgsemat infot edastada. Olulised paigad võivad näiteks vallandada uuringus osalejates reaktsioone, inspireerida neid rääkima isiklikke lugusid ja avaldama konkreetsete objektide, helide või lõhnadega seotud emotsioone või mälestusi. Sellisel juhul võib väita, et igapäevakohtadest saavad 'osalejad' info genereerimises.

Lõpetuseks rõhutan, et kuigi uuringud noorte elu kohta Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopas on tihti keskendunud sotsiaal-majanduslike protsesside mõjule noorte elukvaliteedi kujundajatena (vt ka Taimalu et al., 2007; Krevs, 2008), näitab käesolev doktoritöö, et ka igapäevakohad omavad suurt tähtsust noorte kogemuste, hoiakute, suhete, ja heaolu kujundamisel. Uuringu tulemustele tuginedes leian, et noorte inimeste igapäeva keskkonda ja maakohtade 'igapäeva päriselu' tuleks detailsemalt uurida ja rohkem hinnata. See avaks uusi perspektiive, millest lähtuvalt oleks võimalik uurida nii maaelu ja arengut kui ka globaalseid teemasid nagu muutused, heaolu ja kuuluvus.

VIITED

Ansell, N., 2009. Childhood and the politics of scale: descaling children's geographies? Progress in Human Geography 33 (2), 190- 209.

Blazek, M., Smith, F., 2009. Children's Place in Networks of Childcare in Slovakia: what Childhood and Gender tell us about Post -Socialism. Annals of West University of Timisoara Series GEOGRAPHY 19, 121-132.

Eesti Inimarengu Aruanne, 2010. Available at: http://kogu.ee/public/eia2011/EIA_2011.pdf. [Accessed: 11.05.2012]

Eesti Inimvara Raport, 2010. Tallinn, Estonian Cooperation Assembly & Committee for Sustainable Development.

Gorlach, K., Lošťák, M., Mooney, P.H., 2008. Agriculture, communities, and new social movements: East European ruralities in the process of restructuring. Journal of Rural Studies, 24 (2) , 161-171.

Helve, H., (Ed.), 1999. A Comparative Study of Living Conditions and Participation of Rural Young People in Changing Europe. European Commission (RYPE) Report.

Hörschelmann, K., 2002. History after the end: post-socialist difference in a (post) modern world. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 27 (1), 52-66.

James, A., Jenks,C., Prout, A., 1998. Theorizing Childhood. Polity Press.

Kay, R., Shubin, S., Thelen, T., 2012. Rural realities in the post-socialist space. Journal of Rural Studies 28, 55-62.

Matthews, M., 2003. Children and regeneration: setting an agenda for community participation and integration. Children & Society, 17 (4), 264-276.

Põllumajandusministeerium, 2007. Estonian Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 [Eesti Maaelu Arengukava 2007-2013]. Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, Tallinn.

Schafft, K.A., 2000. A network approach to understanding post-socialist rural inequality in the 1990s. Eastern European Countryside 6, 25–40.

Shubin, S., 2006. The changing nature of rurality and rural studies in Russia. Journal of Rural Studies 22, 422–440.

Sooväli, H., 2008. Kultuurigeograafia. Keel ja Kirjandus 8/9, 654-664.

Stoduto, G., Adlaf, E.M., Mann, R.E. (1998). Adolescents, Bush Parties and Drinking-Driving. Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 59, 544-548.

Taimalu, M., Lahikainen, A.R., Korhonen, P., Kraav, I., 2007. Self-reported fears as indocators of young children's well-being in societal change: a cross-cultural perspective. Social Indicators Research 80, 51-78.

Tervise Arengu Instituut, 2004. Estonian Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) Country Report. Estonian National Institute for Health Development, Tallinn.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Elen-Maarja Trell
Date and place of birth: 16.12.1981 Tallinn
Citizenship: Estonian
Contact: elenmaarja@gmail.com

Academic interests:

- ✓ Collaborative and participatory (action) research, in particular participatory video
- ✓ Socio-spatial processes, well-being, everyday experiences and practices of disadvantaged social groups and individuals
- ✓ Nature-culture interaction and the ways societies relate to and shape the natural environment
- ✓ Urban planning, in particular sustainable infrastructure and the planning of age-friendly environments

Education:

2007 - 2009	Master degree (Cum Laude), *Cultural Geography*, University of Groningen
2006 - 2007	Master degree (Cum Laude), *Environment and Infrastructure Planning*, University of Groningen
2000 - 2004	Bachelor degree, *Environmental Management*, Tallinn University

Professional associations:

The Netherlands Graduate School of Urban and Regional Research (NETHUR)
Geographies of Children, Youth and Families Research Group (Royal Geographical Society)
Association of American Geographers (AAG)
Association for Canadian Studies in the Netherlands (ACSN)